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THE

WORKS

OF THE

RIGHT REVEREND

WILLIAM WARBURTON, D.D.

LORD BISHOP OF GLOUCESTER.

A NEW EDITION,

IN TWELVE VOLUMES.

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TO WHICH IS PREFIXED

A DISCOURSE BY WAY OF GENERAL PREFACE;

CONTAINING

SOME ACCOUNT OF THE LIFE, WRITINGS, AND CHARACTER OF THE AUTHOR;

BY RICHARD HURD, D.D.

LORD BISHOP OF WORCESTER.

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THE

DIVINE LEGATION OF MOSES

DEMONSTRATED.

BOOK VI.

CONTINUED.

SECT. V.

UT though it appear that *a future state of Rewards and Punishments made no part of the Mosaic spensation,* yet the LAW had certainly a SPIRITUAL aning, to be understood when the fulness of time ould come: And hence it received the nature, and orded the efficacy, of PROPHECY. In the interim, the STERY OF THE GOSPEL was occasionally revealed GOD to his chosen Servants, the Fathers and Leaders the Jewish Nation; and the dawning of it was gradly opened by the Prophets, to the People.

nd which is exactly agreeable to what our excellent rch in its SEVENTH ARTICLE *of Religion* teacheth erning this matter.

ARTICLE VII.

The Old Testament is not contrary to the New: both in the Old and New Testament, everlasting is offered to Mankind by Christ, who is the Mediator between God and Man. Wherefore are not to be heard, which feign that the Old rs did look only for transitory Promises.

—*The Old Testament is not contrary to the New*, is a proposition directed against the Manichean error, to which the opinions of some Sectaries of these later times seemed to approach. The Manicheans fancied there was a Good and an Evil Principle; that the Old Dispensation was under the *Evil*, and that the New was the work of the *Good*. Now it hath been proved, that the Old Testament is so far from being contrary to the New, that it was the Foundation, Rudiments, and Preparation for it.

—*For both in the Old and New Testament, everlasting life is offered to mankind by* CHRIST, *who is the only Mediator between God and Man.* That the Church could not mean by these words, that everlasting life was offered to mankind by CHRIST in the Old Testament the SAME MANNER in which it is offered by the N is evident from these considerations:

1. The Church, in the preceding words, only the *Old Testament is* NOT CONTRARY *to the N* but did she mean that everlasting life was offered both, in the *same manner*, she would certainly have s *The Old Testament is* THE SAME *with the New.* T farther appears from the inference drawn from the p position concerning everlasting life—WHEREFORE *t are not to be heard, which feign that the old* FATHE *did look only for transitory promises.* But was this tended sense the true, then the inference had been, ALL THE ISRAELITES *were instructed to look for than transitory promises.*

2. The Church could not mean, that everlasting l offered in the Old and New Testament in the *manner*, because we learn from St. Austin, that this one of the old Pelagian heresies, condemned by Catholics in the Synod of Diospolis,—QUOD EX MITTAT AD REGNUM [COELORUM] QUEMADMO IT EVANGELIUM*.

* De Gestis Pelagii, c. xi. § 24.

What was meant therefore by the words——*both in the Old and New Testament, everlasting Life is offered to Mankind by* CHRIST, was plainly this; "That the "offer of everlasting Life to Mankind by CHRIST in "the New Testament was SHADOWED OUT in the Old; "the SPIRITUAL meaning of the Law and the Pro- "phets referring to that life and *immortality, which* "*was brought to light* by JESUS CHRIST."

3. But lastly, Whatever meaning the Church had in these words, it cannot at all affect our Proposition, *that a future state was not taught by the Law of Moses*; because by *the Old Testament* is ever meant both the *Law* and the *Prophets*. Now I hold that the Prophets gave strong intimations, though in figurative language borrowed from the Jewish Economy, of the *everlasting life* offered to mankind by JESUS CHRIST.

The concluding words of the Article which relate to this matter say, *Wherefore they are not to be heard, which feign that the* OLD FATHERS *did look only for transitory promises*; and so say I: because JESUS himself is to be heard, before all such; and he affirms the direct contrary of the *Father of the faithful* in particular. *Your father Abraham* (says he to the unbelieving Jews) *rejoiced to see my day: and he saw it, and was glad**. A fact not only of the utmost certainty in itself, but of the highest importance to be rightly understood. That I may not therefore be suspected of prevarication, I chuse the instance (the noblest that ever was given of the HARMONY between the Old and New Testament) to illustrate this consistent truth.

I.

And I persuade myself that the learned Reader will be content to go along with me, while I take occasion, from these remarkable words of JESUS, to explain the history of the famous COMMAND TO ABRAHAM TO

* John viii. 56.

OFFER UP HIS SON; for to this History, I shall prove, the words refer; and by their aid I shall be enabled to justify a revolting circumstance in it, which has been long the stumbling-block of Infidelity.

In the sense in which the History of the COMMAND hath been hitherto understood, the best apology for Abraham's behaviour (and it is hard we should be obliged, at this time of day, to make apologies for an action, which, we are told, had the greatest merit in the sight of God) seems to be this, that having had much intercourse with the GOD of Heaven, whose Revelations (not to say, his voice of Nature) spoke him a good and just Being, Abraham concluded that this *command to sacrifice his son*, conveyed to him like the rest, by the same strong and clear impression on the Sensory, came also from the same GOD. How rational soever this solution be, the Deist, perhaps, would be apt to tell us it was little better than Electra's answer to Orestes, who, staggering in his purpose to kill his Mother by the command of Apollo, says: *But if, after all, this should be an evil Demon, who, bent upon mischief, hath assumed the form of a God?* She replies, *What, an evil Demon possess the sacred Tripod! It is not to be supposed**.

But the idea hitherto conceived of this important History has subjected it even to a worse abuse than that of Infidelity: Fanatics, carnally as well as spiritually licentious, have employed it to countenance and support the most abominable of their Doctrines and Practices. Rimius in his *Candid Narrative* hath given us a strange passage from the writings of the *Moravian Brethren*, which the reader, from a note of his, will find transcribed here below†.

However,

* Ορ. Ἆρ' αὖτ' ἀλάστωρ εἶπ' ἀπεικασθεὶς θεῷ;
Ηλ. Ἱερὸν καθίζων τρίποδ'; Ἐγὼ μὲν οὐ δοκῶ. Eurip. Electra, ver. 979.

† "He (the Saviour) can dispose of life and soul; he can make "the œconomy of salvation, and change it every hour, that the hin- "dermost be the foremost: He can make laws, and abrogate them; "HE CAN MAKE THAT TO BE MORAL, WHICH IS AGAINST NA- "TURE;

However, after saving and reserving to ourselves the benefit of all those arguments, which have been hitherto brought to support the history of the COMMAND; I beg leave to say, that the source of all the difficulty is the very wrong idea men have been taught to entertain of it, viz. it was considered as given for a TRIAL ONLY of Abraham's faith; and consequently as a Revelation unsought by him, and unrelated to any of those before vouchsafed unto him: Whereas, in truth, it was a Revelation ARDENTLY DESIRED, had the CLOSEST CONNEXION with, and was, indeed, the COMPLETION OF ALL THE FOREGOING; which were all directed to one end; as the gradual view of the orderly parts of one intire Dispensation required: consequently, the principal purpose of the COMMAND was not to try Abraham's faith, although its nature was such, that in the very giving of it, *God did*, indeed, *tempt* or *try Abraham* *.

In plain terms, the Action was enjoined as the conveyance of information to the Actor, of something he had requested to know: This mode of information by *Signs* instead of *Words* being, as we have shewn, of common practice in those early Ages: And as the force of the following reasoning is founded on that ancient custom, I must request the Reader carefully to review what hath been said in an early part of the Fourth Volume, Book IV. Sect. 4. concerning the origin, progress, and various modes of personal converse; where it is seen, how the conveying information, and giving directions, to Another, by *Signs* and *Actions*, instead of *Words*, came to be of general practice in the first rude Ages; and how, in compliance therewith, GOD was pleased frequently

" TURE; the greatest virtue to be the most villanous action, and " the most virtuous thoughts to be the most criminal: He can in " a quarter of an hour, make ABRAHAM willing to kill his Son, " which however is the most abominable thought a man can have." Count Zinzendorf's Serm. in Rimius, p. 53.

* Gen. xxii. 1.

frequently to converse with the holy Patriarchs and Prophets in that very manner.

Laying down therefore what hath been said on this subject, in the place referred to, as a Postulatum; I undertake to prove the following Proposition:

I.

THAT WHEN GOD SAYS TO ABRAHAM, *TAKE NOW THY SON, THINE ONLY SON ISAAC, &c.** THE COMMAND IS MERELY AN INFORMATION BY ACTION, INSTEAD OF WORDS, OF THE GREAT SACRIFICE OF CHRIST FOR THE REDEMPTION OF MANKIND, GIVEN AT THE EARNEST REQUEST OF ABRAHAM, WHO LONGED IMPATIENTLY *TO SEE CHRIST'S DAY*; and is, in its nature, exactly the same as those informations to the Prophets, where to this Man, God says, *Make thee bonds and yokes, and put them on thy neck* †; to another —*Go take unto thee a wife of whoredoms* ‡, *&c.* and to a third—*Prepare thee stuff for removing* §, *&c.* that is, AN INFORMATION OF HIS PURPOSE BY ACTION INSTEAD OF WORDS; in the first case, foretelling the conquests of Nebuchadnezzar over Edom, Moab, Ammon, Tyre, and Sidon; in the second, declaring his abhorrence of the idolatries of the House of Israel; and in the third, the approaching Captivity of Zedekiah.

The foundation of my Thesis I lay in that scripture of St. John, where JESUS says to the unbelieving *Jews*, YOUR FATHER ABRAHAM REJOICED TO SEE MY DAY; AND HE SAW IT, AND WAS GLAD ‖.

1. If we consider Abraham's personal character, together with the choice made of him for head and origin of that People which GOD would separate and make holy to himself; from whence was to arise the REDEEMER of Mankind, the ultimate end of that separation; we cannot but conclude it probable, that the knowledge

* Gen. xxii. 2. † Jerem. xxvii. 2. ‡ Hosea i. 2.
§ Ezek. xii. 3. ‖ Chap. viii. ver. 56.

of

of this Redeemer would be revealed to him. *Shall I hide from Abraham that thing which I do*?* says GOD, in a matter that much less concerned the Father of the Faithful. And here, in the words of JESUS, we have this probable truth arising from the nature of the thing, made certain and put out of all reasonable question—*Abraham rejoiced*, says JESUS, *to see my* DAY †, τὴν ἡμέραν τὴν ἐμήν. Now when the figurative word *day* is used, not to express in general *the period of any one's existence*, but to denote his peculiar *office and employment*, it must needs signify that very circumstance in his life, which is *characteristic* of such office and employment. But JESUS is here speaking of his peculiar office and employment, as appears from the occasion of the debate, which was his saying, *If any man keep my commandments, he shall never taste of death*, intimating thereby the virtue of his office of Redeemer. Therefore, by the word DAY must needs be meant that *characteristic* circumstance of his life; But that circumstance was the laying down his life for the Redemption of Mankind. Consequently, by the word DAY is meant *the great sacrifice of* CHRIST‡. Hence we may discover the real or affected ignorance of the *Socinian* Comment upon this place; which would have *day* only to signify in general the life of CHRIST, or the period of his abode here on earth.

To reconcile the learned Reader to the propriety and elegance as well as to the truth of this sense of the word, *Day*, he may observe, that as Jesus entitles his great Work, in his state of humiliation, the *Redemption of Mankind*, by the name of HIS DAY; so is he pleased to give the same appellation to his other great Work, in his triumphant state, *the Judgment of Mankind*. "For as the lightning "(says he) that lightneth out of the one part under "heaven,—so shall also the Son of man be in HIS "DAY§." But this figure is indeed as usual in Scrip-

* Gen. xviii. 17.
† John viii. 56.
‡ See Note [A] at the end of this Book.
§ Luke xvii. 24.

ture as it is natural in itself. Thus that signal catastrophe in the fortunes of the Jewish People, both temporal and spiritual, *their Restoration*, is called their DAY—*Then shall the Children of Judah* (says God by the Prophet Hosea) *and the children of Israel, be gathered together, and appoint themselves one head, and they shall come up out of the land: for great shall be* THE DAY *of Israel* *.

2. But not only the *matter*, but the *manner*, likewise of this great Revelation, is delivered in the text—*Abraham rejoiced to* SEE *my day: and he* SAW *it, and was glad.*—ἵνα ΙΔΗι τὴν ἡμέραν τὴν ἐμήν· καὶ ΕΙΔΕ—This evidently shews the Revelation to have been made, not by *relation* in words, but by REPRESENTATION in action. The verb εἶδω is frequently used in the New Testament, in its proper signification, to *see sensibly*. But whether used literally or figuratively, it always denotes a full intuition. That the expression was as strong in the Syrian language used by JESUS, as here in the Greek of his Historian, appears from the reply the Jews made to him—*Thou art not yet fifty years old, and hast thou* SEEN *Abraham* †? Plainly intimating that they understood the assertion of *Abraham's seeing Christ's day* to be a real beholding him in person. We must conclude therefore, from the words of the text, that the Redemption of Mankind was not only revealed to Abraham, but was revealed likewise by *representation*. A late Writer, extremely well skilled in the style of Scripture, was so sensible of the force of JESUS's words, that, though he had no suspicion they related to any part of Abraham's recorded history, yet he saw plainly they implied an information by representation—*Thus also Abraham* (says he) *saw the day of* CHRIST, *and was glad. But this must be in a typical or prophetical vision* ‡.—The excellent Dr. Scott is of the same opinion. He supposes "the words refer to "some peculiar discoveries, which the Spirit of God

* Chap i. ver. 11. † John viii. 57.

‡ See Note [B] at the end of this Book.

"might

" might make to Abraham, for his own private conso-
" lation, though not recorded in Scripture *."

So far, then, is clear, that Abraham had indeed this Revelation. The next question will be, whether we can reasonably expect to find it in the history of his life, recorded in the Old Testament? And that we may find it here, both the words of JESUS, and the nature of the thing, assure us.

1. We learn, by the history of CHRIST's Ministry, that in his disputations with the Jews, he never urged them with any circumstance of GOD's Dispensations to their Forefathers, which they either were not, or might not be, well acquainted with by the study of their Scriptures. The reason is evident. His credentials were twofold, SCRIPTURE and MIRACLES. In the first way therefore of confirming his Mission, if, instead of appealing to the course of GOD's Dispensation to his chosen People, as delivered in Scripture, he had given them an unknown history of that Dispensation, (as was one of the tricks of Mahomet in his Alcoran) such a method had been so far from supporting his Character, that it would have heightened the unfavourable prejudices of Unbelievers towards him: as looking like a confession that the known history was against him; and that he was forced to invent a new one, to countenance his pretensions. He must, therefore, for the necessary support of his Character, appeal to some acknowleged Facts. These were all contained in SCRIPTURE and TRADITION. But, we know, he always studiously declined supporting himself on their *Traditions*, though they were full of circumstances favourable to the Religion he came to propagate, such as the doctrines *of eternal Life*, and the *Resurrection of the Body:* Nay, he took all occasions of decrying their TRADITIONS as impious corruptions, by which they *had rendered the* WRITTEN *word of none effect.* We conclude, therefore, from JESUS's own

* Christian Life, Vol. V. p. 194.

words,

words, that the circumstance of Abraham's knowledge of his *Day* is certainly to be found in Abraham's history: Not in so clear a manner, indeed, as to be understood by a Carnal-minded Jew, nor even by a System-making Christian, for reasons hereafter to be explained; yet certainly There; and certainly proved to be There, by the best rules of logic and criticism.

2. But though this did not (as it does) appear from the words of JESUS, yet it might be collected from the very nature of the thing. For, admit only the fact (as we now must) that *Abraham did see* CHRIST'S *Day*, and it is utterly incredible that so capital a circumstance should be omitted in his History, a sacred Record, pre-ordained for one of the supports and evidences of CHRIST'S Religion. That it could not be delivered in the book of Genesis, in terms plainly to be understood by the People, during the first periods of a preparatory Dispensation, is very certain; as will be seen hereafter: But then, this is far from being a reason why it should not be recorded at all: Great ends, such as supporting the truth of the future Dispensation, being to be gained by the delivery of it even in so obscure a manner.

Having thus far cleared our way, and shewn, that *the doctrine of Redemption* was revealed to Abraham; and that the history of that Revelation is recorded in Scripture; we proceed to the proof of these two points:

I. That there is no place, in the whole history of *Abraham*, but this, where he is commanded to offer up his Son, which bears the least marks or resemblance of such a Revelation.

II. That this Command to offer up his Son, has all the marks of such a Revelation.

I. On the first head, it will be necessary to give a short abstract of Abraham's story: in which we find a regular account of the course and order of GOD'S Dispensations to him, from the time of his being called out of Chaldea,

to the Command to offer up his Son Isaac; the last of GOD's Revelations to him, recorded in Scripture.

The first notice given us of this Patriarch is in the account of his Genealogy, Family, and Country*. We are then told†, that God called him from his father's house to *a Land which he should shew him:* And to excite his obedience, he promises to make of him *a great Nation*‡: to have him in his peculiar protection, and to *make all the Nations of the Earth blessed through him*§. The last part of this promise is remarkable, as it contains the proper end of GOD's Choice and Separation of him and his Posterity; and so, very fitly made, by the sacred Writer, the foundation of the history of GOD's Dispensations to him; and a mark to direct the reader to what, they are all ultimately to be referred. Which, by the way, exposes the extreme absurdity in Collins and Tindal, who would have the *blessing* here promised to be only an Eastern form of speech, honourable to the Father of the Faithful.—When Abraham, in obedience to this command, was come into the land of Canaan‖, GOD vouchsafed him a farther Revelation of his Will; and now told him, that this was the Land (which he had before said he *would shew him)* to be inherited by *his Seed***. When he returned from Egypt, GOD revealed himself still farther, and *marked* out the *bounds*†† of that Land, which he assured him should be *to him and his Seed for ever*‡‡. Which *Seed* should be *as the dust of the earth* for number§§. After all these gracious and repeated assurances, we may well suppose Abraham to be now grown uneasy at his Wife's barrenness, and his own want of issue to inherit the Promises. Accordingly, we find him much disturbed with these apprehensions‖‖; and that GOD, to remove them, appeared to him in a *vision*,

* Gen. xi. 27, & seq. † Chap. xii. ver. 1. ‡ Ver. 2.
§ Ver. 3. ‖ Ver. 5. ** Ver. 7.
†† Chap. xiii. ver. 14. ‡‡ Ver. 15. §§ Ver. 16.
‖‖ Chap. xv. ver. 1.

and

and said, *Fear not, Abram; I am thy shield, and exceeding great reward.* Abraham, thus encouraged to tell his grief, confessed it to be for his want of issue, and for that he suspected the promised blessings were to be inherited by his adopted children, the sons of his servant *Eliezer of Damascus**. To ease him of this disquiet, God was now pleased to acquaint him, that his design was not, that an adopted son should inherit, but one *out of his own bowels*†. And, for farther assurance, he instructs him in the various fortunes of his Posterity—*That his Seed should be a stranger in a Land that was not theirs, which Land should afflict them four hundred years, and that then he would judge that Nation, and afterwards bring them out with great substance to inherit the Land of Canaan*‡. At the same time God more particularly marks out the bounds of the Promised Land, and reckons up the several Nations which then inhabited it§. Things being in this train, and Abraham now satisfied that the Seed of his loins was to inherit the Promises; Sarah, on account of her sterility, persuaded her Husband to go in unto her Hand-maid Hagar, the Egyptian‖. In this she indulged her own vanity and ambition; she would have a Son whom she might adopt; *It may be* (says she) *that I may obtain children by her***; and she flattered herself with being, at the same time, an instrument to promote the designs of Providence: *Behold now* (says she) *the Lord hath restrained me from bearing.* To this project Abraham consented. Hagar conceived, and bare a Son, called Ishmael††. The good Patriarch was now fully satisfied: He grew fond of Ishmael; and reckoned upon *him* for the inheritor of the promises. To correct this mistake, God vouchsafed him a new Revelation‡‡; in which he is told, that God would not only (as had been before promised) bless and multiply his

* Chap. xv. ver. 2, 3. † Ver. 4. ‡ Ver. 13, 14.
§ Ver. 18. to the end. ‖ Chap. xvi. ** Ver. 2.
†† Ver. 15. ‡‡ Chap. xvii.

Posterity

Posterity in an extraordinary manner, but would separate them from all other Nations, and he would be their GOD, and they should be his PEOPLE*. And this *national adoption* requiring a mutual Covenant, the rite of CIRCUMCISION is at the same time enjoined as the mark of the Covenant†. Lastly, Abraham is shewn his fond mistake, and told, that it was not the *Son of the bond-woman*, but of his Wife Sarah, who was ordained to be Heir of the Promises‡. But Abraham had so long indulged himself in his mistake, and consequently in his affection for Ishmael, that he begs GOD would indulge it too—*O that Ishmael might live before thee*§. And GOD, in compassion to his paternal fondness, graciously promises that the Posterity of Ishmael should become exceeding great and powerful‖, but, that, nevertheless, his Covenant should be with *Isaac, and with his Seed after him*¶. However, this Revelation having been received with some kind of doubt, as appears by the words of the historian **, God was pleased to repeat the promise of a Son by Sarah††: and even to mark the time of his birth‡‡; according to which, *Sarah conceived and bore Abraham a Son*§§. After this, GOD revealed himself yet again to Abraham‖‖, with a command to put away his Son Ishmael; and to assure him, that the CHOSEN POSTERITY should come from Isaac: For Abraham was not yet weaned from his unreasonable partiality for Ishmael; but still reckoned upon him as his *Second hopes*, in case of any disaster or misfortune, that should happen to Isaac. This appears from Ishmael's insolent behaviour¶¶; from Abraham's great unwillingness to dismiss him*†; and from God's assuring him, in order to make him easy, *That in Isaac his Seed should*

* Ver. 7, & seq.
† See note [C] at the end of this Book.
‡ Ver. 16.
§ Ver. 18.
‖ Ver. 20, & seq.
¶ Ver. 19.
** Ver. 17.
†† Chap. xviii.
‡‡ Ver. 10. 14.
§§ Chap. xxi. ver 2.
‖‖ Ver. 12.
¶¶ Ver. 9.
*† Ver. 11.

be

*be called**.——We now come to the famous History of the Command to offer up his Son Isaac—*And it came to pass* (says the sacred historian) AFTER THESE THINGS, *that God did tempt Abraham, and said, Take now thy Son,* THINE ONLY SON *Isaac, whom thou lovest, and get thee unto the land of Moriah: and offer him there for a burnt-offering upon one of the mountains which I will tell thee of. And Abraham arose*†, &c. This was the last of God's Revelations to Abraham—*And it came to pass after these things*—And with this, the history of them is closed.

Here we see all these Revelations, except the last, are plain and clear, as referring to TEMPORAL Felicities to be conferred on Abraham and his Posterity after the flesh; through whom, some way or other, a BLESSING was to extend to all Mankind. Not one of these therefore can pretend to be that Revelation of the *Redemption of the world.* The last is the only dark and obscure one of the whole; which, if indeed a Revelation of this grand Mystery, must of necessity, as we shall shew, be darkly and obscurely *recorded.*

But to this perhaps it may be objected, that the famous Promise of GOD to Abraham; that *in him should all the Families of the earth be blessed*‡, is that Revelation; because St. Paul calls this the preaching of the Gospel unto him—*And the Scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the Heathen through Faith, preached before the Gospel unto Abraham, saying, In thee shall all nations of the earth be blessed*§ To this I reply, that the Apostle is here convincing the Galatians, that the Gospel of CHRIST is founded on the same PRINCIPLE with that which justified Abraham, namely, FAITH;—*Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness*‖. He then pursues his argument in this manner, *Therefore, they which be of Faith, are blessed*

* Chap. xxi. ver. 12. † Chap xxii. ver. 1, 2, 3.
‡ Chap. xii. ver. 3. § Gal. iii. 8. ‖ Ver. 6.

with

*with faithful Abraham**. The reason he gives is from the promise in question, given in reward of Abraham's *Faith*, that *in him should all Nations be blessed.* This is the force of the argument; and it is very finely managed. But then the terms, *Faith* and *Gospel*, are here used, as they very often are in the apostolic writings†, not in their specific but generic sense, for *confidence in any one*, and *glad tidings in general.* For it is plain, Abraham's *Faith* here recommended, was not that *Christian Faith* in JESUS the MESSIAH, but, faith in GOD, who had promised to make his Posterity according to the flesh, as numerous as the stars of Heaven, when as yet he had no offspring‡. In a like latitude of expression, St. Paul uses the word προευαγγελίζομαι, to *preach the Gospel beforehand*; not the tidings of the Messiah the Redeemer, but the *effects* of the *Redemption* wrought by him, a BLESSING on the whole race of mankind. Tidings which indeed referred to a future Dispensation: and, in this, differing from his use of the word *Faith*, which did not. But then, this is very far from his SEEING CHRIST'S DAY; of which indeed he speaks in another place, as we shall see presently. It is true, this promised BLESSING was the preparatory Revelation, by which, we were to estimate the ultimate end of all the following; and on which, we must suppose them to be built: And so much we are concerned to prove it was. I conclude therefore, that when Jesus says, *Abraham saw his Day*; and when St. Paul says, that he *had the Gospel preached before unto him*, they spoke of two different Revelations. We come, therefore,

II. To the second point: which is to shew, that the COMMAND to offer up Isaac was the very revelation of CHRIST'S DAY, or the Redemption of mankind, by his death and sufferings.

* Ver. 9.

† See what hath been said on this subject in the preceding discourse on the xith chapter to the *Hebrews.*

‡ Gen. xv. 6.

1. We

1. We may observe, from this short view of Abraham's history, that all GOD's Revelations to him, even unto this last, open by degrees; and relate, primarily indeed, to his Posterity according to the flesh, but ultimately, to the whole race of Mankind: as appears from that MYSTICK Promise so early made to him as the foundation of all the following, that *in Him should all the Families of the earth be blessed.* These are the two great coincident Truths, to which all these Revelations tend. But the last, the famous *Command* in question, which one would naturally expect to find the confirmation and completion of the rest, hath, if the common Interpreters understand it right, no kind of relation to them, but is entirely foreign to every thing that preceded. Hence we conclude, and surely not unreasonably, that there is something more in the *Command* than these Interpreters, resting in the outside relation, have yet discovered to us.

2. But this is not all. The *Command*, as it hath been hitherto understood, is not only quite disjoined from the rest of Abraham's history, but likewise occupies a place in it, which, according to our ideas of things, it hath certainly usurped. The *Command* is supposed to be given as a *Trial* only*. Now when the great *Searcher of hearts* is pleased to *try* any of his Servants, either for example sake, or for some other end favourable of his Dispensations to mankind; as in this, he condescends to the manner of men, who cannot judge of the merits of their inferior Agents without Trial, so we may be assured, he would accommodate himself to their manner likewise, in that which is the material circumstance of a Trial: But, amongst men, the Agent is always tried *before* he be set on work, or rewarded; and not *after:* because the Trial is in order to know, or to make it known, whether he be fit for the work, or deserving of the Reward. When we come therefore to this place, and see a *Command* only to tempt or *try*

* See Note [D] at the end of this Book.

Abraham,

Abraham, we naturally expect, on his answering to the Trial, to find him importantly employed or greatly rewarded. On the contrary we are told, that this Trial was made after all his Work was done, and all his Reward received—*And it came to pass after these things.* Nay, what is still more strange, after he had been once *tried* already. For the promise to him, when he was yet childless, his Wife barren, and both of them far advanced in years, that *his seed should be as the stars of Heaven for multitude*, was a Trial of his *faith*; and his believing, against all probability in a natural way, the sacred Historian tells us, was *accounted to him for righteousness**. Such therefore being the method both of GOD and Men in this matter, we must needs conclude, that the *Command* was not, according to the common notion, *a Trial only*, because it comes *after* all GOD's Dispensations †. Yet as the sacred text assures us it was a *Trial*; and as a *Trial* necessarily precedes the employment or reward of the person tried; we must needs conclude, that as no *employment*, so some *benefit* followed this trial. Now, on our interpretation, a *benefit*, as we shall see, did follow: We have reason therefore to conclude that this interpretation is the true.

3. Having seen the difficulties arising from the common interpretation of the Command, let us view it now on the other side; in the new light in which we have adventured to place it. And here we shall find that every circumstance of the Story concurs to support our interpretation. From the view given of Abraham's history, we see, as was said before, how all GOD's revelations to him, to this last, ultimately related to that mystic fundamental premise made to him, on his first Vocation, that *in him should all the families of the earth be blessed.* GOD opens the scheme of his Dispensations by exact and regular steps; and the Revelations follow one another gradually and in order. Abraham is first

* Gen. xv. 6. † See Note [E] at the end of this Book.

commanded to go into a Land which should be shewn to him—then that Land, to be possessed by his numerous posterity, is exhibited before him—Its distinct boundaries are afterwards marked out—He is next assured, while yet childless, that his posterity, to which so much was promised, should not be from an adopted son, but from one out of his own loins—He is then told that his son should be born of Sarah—which is followed by a formal execution of the COVENANT confirmed by the seal of *Circumcision*—After all this, the birth of Isaac is predicted:—who being born at the appointed time, Ishmael is ordered to be sent away; to design with more certainty the succession of the son by Sarah. Here we see throughout, a gradual opening, and fit preparative for some farther Revelation; which, in pursuance of this regular scheme of progressive Dispensations, could be no other than that of the REDEMPTION OF MANKIND BY THE MESSIAH, the completion of the whole Economy of Grace, as it only is the explanation of his first and fundamental Promise, *that in Abraham should all the families of the earth be blessed.* But now, the sole remaining revelation of God's Will to Abraham, recorded by the sacred Historian, is the Command to offer up his son Isaac. This COMMAND, then, as there is no other that can pretend to be the revelation in question, and as we have shewn it must be somewhere or other recorded in Abraham's story, is the very revelation we seek; which perfects all the foregoing, and makes the whole series complete and uniform. And the place in which we find it is its proper station; for, being the completion of the rest, it must needs be the last in order.

Such, in the *intention* of the Holy Spirit, doth St. CHRYSOSTOM, in his comment on the place, understand it to be—τὴν δὲ ἩΜΕΡΑΝ ἐνταῦθά μοι δοκεῖ λέγειν τὴν τοῦ σταυροῦ, ἣν ἐν τῇ τοῦ χριοῦ προσφορᾷ καὶ τοῦ Ἰσαὰκ προδιετύπωσε. And in this he is joined or followed by ERASMUS, in his paraphrase. Hoc ænigmate Jesus significavit, Abraham, quum

quum pararet immolare filium Isaac, per Prophetiæ spiritum vidisse Dominum Jesum in mortem crucis a patre tradendum pro mundi salute.—But these excellent men, not reflecting on that ancient mode of information, where the Inquirer is answered by a significative *action* instead of *speech*, never conceived that this Command was an *imparted* information of that kind, but rather a *typical* representation unsought, and given in an enjoined Rite; of whose import Abraham had then no knowledge*.

4. Again, We find the Revelation of the *redemption of mankind* in that very place, where, if considered only in itself, and not relatively, as the completion of the rest, we should, according to all the rules of plain sense, be disposed to seek it. We must know then that this Revelation, as shall be proved from the words of JESUS, *Abraham rejoiced to see my day, and he saw it, and was glad*, was ardently desired and sought after by the Patriarch. Now the *happiness* or REDEMPTION of mankind promised, on Abraham's first Vocation, to come through him, could not but make him more and more inquisitive into the manner of its being brought about, in proportion as he found himself to be more and more personally concerned as the Instrument of so great a blessing. But every new Revelation would shew him still farther interested in this honour: Therefore, by the time Ishmael was ordered to be sent away, and the *promised Seed* fixed in Isaac, we must needs suppose him very impatient to understand the Mystery of *Redemption*; and so, fitly prepared to receive this last and supreme Revelation. This, in the like cases, we find to be the disposition and state of mind in the holy men of old. Thus Daniel, by the study of the Prophecies of Jeremiah, understanding the approaching restoration of the Jews, applies himself by fasting and prayer for God's further information; and the Angel Gabriel is sent unto him. So John, anxious and solicitous for the suffering

* See note [F] at the end of this Book.

Church, being in prayers on the Lord's day, was favoured with all his glorious Revelations.

5. Again, The new light in which this Command is placed, dispels all that perplexity in the common interpretation (taken notice of above) arising from our ideas of a *trial*; where *that* which should in use and reason go before some extraordinary favour, is made to come after all. But now, according to our sense of the *Command*, the trial, as is meet, precedes the last and greatest favour ever bestowed by God on Abraham.

6. To confirm all this, we may consider that this interpretation of the *Command* is most easy and natural, as being intirely agreeable to the ancient way of communicating information. We have shewn * it to have been the general custom of Antiquity, in personal conferences, to instruct by *actions* instead of *words*; a custom begun out of necessity, but continued out of choice, for the superior advantages it hath in making an impression. For *motion, naturally* significative, which enters at the eye, hath a much stronger effect than articulate *sound*, only *arbitrarily* significative, which enters at the ear. We have shewn likewise, by numerous examples, that God himself vouchsafed, in compliance to a general custom, to use this way of information, when he instructed the holy Patriarchs and Prophets in his Will.

7. Again, As the high importance of this Revelation seemed to require its being given in the strong and forcible way of action †, so nothing can be conceived more apposite to convey the information required, than *this very action*. Abraham desired earnestly to be let into the mystery of the REDEMPTION; and GOD, to instruct him (in the best manner humanity is capable of receiving instruction) in the infinite extent of divine goodness to mankind, *who spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all* ‡, let Abraham feel, by ex-

* See Book IV. § 4. † See note [G] at the end of this Book.

‡ Rom. viii. 32.

perience,

perience, what it was to lose a beloved Son;—*Take now thy son, thine only son Isaac*; the Son born miraculously when Sarah was past child-bearing, as Jesus was miraculously born of a pure Virgin. The duration too of the action was the same as that between CHRIST's Death and Resurrection; both which were designed to be represented in it: and still farther, not only the *final archetypical* Sacrifice of the Son of GOD was figured in the *command* to offer Isaac, but the *intermediate Typical* sacrifice, in the Mosaic Economy, was represented, by the permitted sacrifice of the Ram offered up instead of Isaac.

8. The last reason I shall offer in support of this point, that the *Command* concerning Isaac was this Revelation of Christ's *day*, or the redemption of mankind by his death and sufferings, is the allusion which Jesus makes (in these words, *Abraham rejoiced to see my day, &c.*) to the following words of Moses, in the history of the command—*And Abraham called the name of that place Jehovah-jireh: as it is said to this day, In the mount of the Lord it shall be seen.*

To shew that Jesus alluded to these words of Moses, and had them in his eye, when he speaks of *Abraham rejoicing to see his day*, it will be proper to consider the true force and meaning of either text. The words of Jesus have been fully considered already *.

And, in the words of Moses—*Abraham called the name of that place Jehovah-jireh: as it is said to this day, In the mount of the Lord it ..ll be seen*—we have the assertion of Jesus confirmed, that *Abraham saw Christ's day, and was glad.* 1. *Jehovah-jireh* signifies, as several of the best interpreters agree, THE LORD SHALL BE SEEN †. But with what propriety could this

pame

* See p. 6. & seq.

† "*Dominus videbitur*, (says the learned Father Houbigant) "1°, Non *videtur*, ne ab futuro verbi aberremus. 2°, Non *videbit*, non "modo quia non additur quid sit Deus visurus, sed etiam quia in tota

name be given to it by Abraham, if, in this transaction, he had not *seen* the representation of the Lord's passion, which was to happen in a future age? And if he did see it, how apposite was the name! The Historian goes on—*as it is said to this day, In the mount of the Lord it shall be seen*; or more exactly to the Hebrew—*for he said, in the mount* THE LORD SHALL BE SEEN. In the first part of the verse, the sacred Historian tells us that Abraham called the mount, *The Lord shall be seen*; and in the latter part he acquaints us with the manner, how Abraham imposed that appellation, namely, by the use of a proverbial speech implying the reason of the name—*To-day in the mount, the Lord shall be seen**. Proverbial speeches, before the general use of recording abstract names and things by writing, being the best and safest conveyance of the memory of events to Posterity. Conformably to this interpretation of the text, the Historian on his entrance on the transaction calls the land of Moriah,

" illâ visione, hominis est *videre*, Domini, *videri*; propter quam " causam Deus locum istum mox nomine *visionis* insigniebat. Nimi- " rum Deus Abrahamo id ostendit, quod *Abraham vidit & gavisus* " *est*." The near relation of these words of Jesus to those of Moses, was too strongly marked to be overlooked by this very judicious Critic, though he considered the transaction in no other light than as a *Type* of the death and passion of Jesus.

* Atque hoc illud est (says Father Houbigant) quod memoriæ sempiternæ Abraham consecrabat, cum ita subjungeret *hodie in monte, Dominus videbitur*; illud *hodie* sic accipiens, ut accepit Paulus Ap. illud Davidis, *hodie si vocem ejus audieritis*; quod *hodie* tamdiu durat, quamdiu sæcula illa durabunt, de quibus Apostolus *donec hodie cognominatur*. Propterea Abraham non dicit, *hodie Dominus videtur*. Nam id spectaculum nunc solus videt Abraham, postea omnes visuri sunt, et ad omnes pertinebit istud, *videbitur*, generatim dictum, cum omnes Unigenitum *in monte* viderint generis humani victimam factam. Nec aliam sententiam series verborum patitur. Ex qua serie illi deviant, qui hæc verba, *dixit enim hodie in monte dominus*—Mosi sic narranti attribuunt, *propterea dicitur hodie in monte Domini*—quasi renovet Moyses usurpatum sua ætate proverbium. Nam si sic erit, non jam docebit Abraham, cur huic loco nomen fecerit *Dominus videbitur*; quam tamen nominum notationem in sacris paginis non omittunt ii, quicumque nomina rebus imponunt. Quod contra plane docebit Abraham, si de eo Moysis sic narrat, *vocavit nomen loci hujus*, DEUS VIDEBITUR; *nam* dixit, *in monte Deus videbitur*.

Moriah, to which Abraham went with Isaac (according to Jerom's interpretation), the LAND OF VISION, which shews that the words of Jesus, *Abraham* SAW MY DAY, *and was* GLAD, evidently allude to this extraordinary circumstance; namely, the disposition of Abraham's mind on the occasion, expressed in his memorial of a new name imposed on the scene of action; the ancient way of commemorating joyful and happy events. In a word, Jesus says, *Abraham saw his day*; and Abraham, by the name he imposed upon the mount, declares the same thing. But as the VISION was of a public, not of a private nature, he expresses himself in terms which signify what mankind in general *shall see*, not what he himself *had seen*—THE LORD SHALL BE SEEN. From a vague allusion, therefore, of the words of Jesus, to this history of the *command* in general, we have now fixed them to the very words of Moses, to which they more particularly refer.

The sum then of the Argument is this—JESUS expressly says that *Abraham saw, and rejoiced to see, his day*, or the great *Sacrifice* for the sins of mankind by *representation*—The records of sacred History must needs verify his assertion—But there is no place in Scripture which presents the least traces of this Revelation, except the history of the Command to offer Isaac. This history not only easily and naturally *admits* of such a sense, but even *demands* it—And reciprocally, this sense gives all imaginable light to the History; and removes the greatest difficulties attending the common interpretation of it. Hence, we conclude with certainty, that the *command to Abraham to offer up his son* was only an INFORMATION IN ACTION, which, at Abraham's earnest request, God was graciously pleased to give him of the *great sacrifice of Christ for the Redemption of mankind*. The thing to be proved. Two great ends seem to be gained by this interpretation: The one, to free the Command from a supposed violation of natural

Law; The other, to support the connexion and dependency between the two Revelations; for this interpretation makes the history of the Command a DIRECT Prophesy of Christ as Redeemer of the world: whereas the common brings it, at most, but to a TYPICAL intimation. Now the Defenders* of the common interpretation confess, that "the evidence of *direct* Prophecies is superior to that of *Types*."

The only plausible Objection which can be made to my explanation, I conceive to be the following—"That what "is here supposed the principal and proper reason of the "*Command*, is not at all mentioned by the sacred Historian; but another, of a different nature; namely, the "Trial of Abraham's faith and obedience—*And it came* "*to pass after these things, God did tempt Abraham,* "*and said, Take now thy son, thine only son Isaac*—And "when the affair is over, the same reason is again insinuated:—*By myself have I sworn, saith the Lord,* "*for because thou hast done this thing, and hast not* "*withheld thy son, thine only son, that in blessing I* "*will bless thee*†," &c.

1. To the first part of the Objection I answer, That the knowledge of God's future dispensation in the redemption of mankind by the death of his Son, revealed, as a singular grace, to the Father of the Faithful, was what could by no means be communicated to the Hebrew People, when Moses wrote this History for their use; because they being then to continue long under a carnal Economy, this knowledge, of the END OF THE LAW, would have greatly indisposed them to a Dispensation, with which (as a *Schoolmaster*, that was to bring them by degrees, through a harsh and rugged discipline, to the easy yoke of CHRIST) GOD, in his infinite wisdom, thought fit to exercise them‡. But he who does not see, from the plain reason of the thing, the necessity of the

* Dr. Stebbing. † Gen. xxii. 16, 17.

‡ See note [H] at the end of this Book.

Historian's

Historian's silence, is referred, for farther satisfaction, to what hath been already, and will be hereafter said, to evince the necessity of such a conduct, in other momentous points relating to that future Dispensation.

In the mean time, I give him St. Paul's word for this conduct of Moses, who expressly tells us, that he obscured some parts of his history, or put a *veil over his face, that the Israelites might not see to the end of that Law which was to be abolished.* And what was that *end*, if not the *Redemption of mankind* by the death and sacrifice of Christ?—*Moses* (says he) *put a veil over his face, that the Children of Israel could not stedfastly look to the end of that which is abolished. But their minds were blinded: for until this day remaineth the same veil untaken away, in the reading of the Old Testament; which veil is done away in* CHRIST*.

But it may be asked, perhaps, "If such Revelations could not be *clearly* recorded, why were they recorded at all?" For a very plain as well as weighty reason; that when the *fulness of time* should come, they might rise up in Evidence against Infidelity, for the real relation and dependency between the two Dispensations of *Moses* and of *Christ*†; when from this, and divers the like instances it should appear, that the *first* Dispensation could be but very imperfectly understood without a reference to the *latter*.

But had not the sacred Writer designedly obscured this illustrious Revelation, by an omission of the attendant circumstances, yet the narrative of such a *converse by action* was not in its nature so intelligible or obvious, as that where God is shewn *conversing by action*, to the Prophets, in the several instances formerly given‡. And the reason is this. Those informations, as they are given to the Prophets for the instruction of the People, have necessarily, in the course of the history, their ex-

* 2 Cor. iii. 13, 14. And see note [I] at the end of this Book.

† See note [K] at the end of this Book. ‡ See Book IV. § 4.

planations

planations annexed. But the information to Abraham being solely for his *own private consolation* (as Dr. Scott expresses it above) there was no room for that formal explanation, which made the commanded actions to the Prophets so clear and intelligible.—Yet, as if I had never said this, Dr. Stebbing tells the world, I make this action of Abraham's parallel to those of the Prophets; *whereas* (says he) *it differs from them all in a very material circumstance, as they had their several explanations annexed, and this had not.* But to shew by example, as well as comparison, that obscurity is naturally attendant on the relation of *converse by action*, where the information is for the sake of the Actor only, I shall instance in a case where no obscurity was affected by the Historian. It is the relation of Jacob's wrestling with the Angel*. The Patriarch, on his return from Haran to his native Country, hearing of his brother Esau's power, and dreading his resentment for the defrauded Birthright, addresses himself for protection in his distress to the GOD of his Fathers, with all humility and confidence. GOD hears his prayer; and is pleased to inform him of the happy issue of the adventure, by a *significative action:* The following night, he has a struggle with an Angel, with whom he is suffered to make his part so good, that from thence he collected GOD had granted his petition. This is the circumstance in Jacob's history, which affords such mirth to our illiterate Libertines: For this *information by action* concerning only the Actor, who little needed to be told the meaning of a mode of Instruction, at that time in vulgar use, hath now an obscurity which the Scripture-relations of the same mode of information to the Prophets are free from, by reason of their being given for the use of the People, to whom they were explained.

But it may perhaps be asked, "Why, when *the fulness of time was come*, Scripture did not break its long silence,

* Gen. xxii. 24, etc.

and

and instruct us in the principal and proper reason of the *Command* to offer Isaac?" I answer, that it has done so. The words of Jesus are a convincing proof. Nay, I might go further, and say that this is not the only place where the true reason of the *Command* is plainly hinted at. The Author of the Epistle to the Hebrews, speaking of this very *Command*, says—*By faith Abraham, when he was tried, offered up Isaac—accounting that God was able to raise him up even from the dead, from whence also he received him* IN A FIGURE*; EN ΠΑΡΑΒΟΛΗ, *in a Parable:* a mode of information either by *words* or *actions*, which consists *in putting one thing for another*. Now, in a Writer who regarded this commanded action as a representative information of the Redemption of mankind, nothing could be more fine or easy than this expression. For, though Abraham did not indeed receive Isaac restored to life after a real dissolution, yet the Son being in this action to represent CHRIST suffering death for the sins of the world, when the Father brought him safe from mount Moriah after three days, (during which the Son was in a state of condemnation to death) the Father plainly received him, under the character of CHRIST's Representative, as restored from the dead. For, as his being brought to the mount, there bound, and laid upon the Altar, figured the death and sufferings of CHRIST, so his being taken from thence alive, as properly figured CHRIST's Resurrection from the dead. With the highest propriety therefore and elegance of speech, might Abraham be said to receive Isaac from the dead *in a parable*, or in representation†. But the nature of the *command* not being understood, these words of the epistle have been hitherto interpreted, to signify only that *Isaac was a type of Christ*, in the same sense that the *old Tabernacle*, in this epistle‡, is called a *type*—ἥτις ΠΑΡΑΒΟΛΗ, that is, a thing designed by the

* Chap. xi. ver. 17—19. † See note [L] at the end.
‡ Chap. ix. ver. 9.

Holy

Holy Spirit to have both a present significancy and a future. Which amounts but just to this, That Abraham receiving Isaac safe from mount Moriah, in the manner related by Scripture, he thereby became a *Type*. An ancient Interpretation, as appears from the reading of the vulgar Latin—*Unde eum &* IN PARABOLAM *accepit*, for *in parabola*, as it ought to have been translated conformably to the Greek. However, I desire it may be observed, in corroboration of my sense of the *Command*, that the resemblance to Christ's sacrifice in all the circumstances of the story was so strong, that Interpreters could never overlook the resemblance, in their comments on the passage.

2. To the second part of the Objection, I answer thus; It is the office of History to assign the Causes of the facts related. In those facts therefore, which have several Causes, of which the principal cannot be conveniently told, the inferior come in properly to take its place. Thus, in the case before us; though it be made, I presume, very evident that the principal design of the Command was to reveal to Abraham, by *action* instead of *words*, the Redemption of mankind; yet as this was a favour of a very high nature, and conferred on Abraham at his earnest request, it was but fit he should approve himself worthy of it by some proportionable Trial; agreeably to what we find in Scripture to be GOD's way of dealing with his favoured Servants. On this account, therefore, GOD was pleased, by the very manner in which this Mystery was revealed, to tempt or try Abraham. Where the making the *favour* itself the *trial* of his deserving it, hath all that superior elegance and beauty which is to be conceived in the Dispensations of divine Wisdom only. Now, as the principal reason of the Command could not be conveniently told by the Historian, this inferior one of the *Trial* is assigned with great truth and propriety—*And it came to pass after these things, God did tempt Abraham, and said, Take now thy son, &c.* And it is to

be observed, that the very manner of recording this reason shews it to be indeed what we suppose it; an inferior one. For it is not said that God gave this Command in order to try Abraham, which expresses a principal reason; but that, in giving the Command, God did try him, which at most only implies an inferior one. We have said, that a Trial, when approved, implied a following reward. Now as there may be more reasons than one for giving a *Command*, so there may be more rewards than one attendant on a *Trial*. Thus it was in the case before us. And it is remarkable, that the sacred Historian has observed the same rule with regard to the reward of the Trial as to the reason of the Command. The principal and peculiar reward of Abraham's Trial here was the revelation of the mystery of Redemption: this the Historian could not mention, for the reasons given above: but besides this, GOD rewarded him with a repetition of all the former Promises. This the Historian could, and, in pursuance of the rules of History, does mention:—*By myself have I sworn, saith the Lord, for because thou hast done this thing, and hast not withheld thy son, thine only son, that in blessing I will bless thee, and in multiplying I will multiply thy seed as the stars of Heaven, and as the sand which is upon the sea shore; and thy seed shall possess the gate of his enemies; and in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed, because thou hast obeyed my voice* *.

On the whole, This Objection to the interpretation, the only one I can think of, is so far from obscuring, and weakening, that it adds great light and strength unto it. For, admitting the sense here proposed, to be indeed the true, we see the Story must of necessity have been told in the very manner we find it to be recorded †.

Before I conclude this part of the Discourse, I shall but just take notice how strongly this interpretation of the

* Gen. xxij. ver. 16, & seq.

† See note [M] at the end of this Book.

Command

Command concludes against the SOCINIANS, for the real *sacrifice* of CHRIST, and the proper *Redemption* of mankind. For if the Command was an information by *action* instead of *words*, the proof conveyed in it is decisive; there being here no room for their evasion of its being a *figurative expression*, since the *figurative action*, the original of such expression, denotes either a *real sacrifice*, or nothing at all.

II.

I come now to the other part of this Discourse, viz. to shew, that the interpretation here given intirely dissipates all those blustering objections which Infidelity hath raised up against the historic truth of the relation.

They say, "GOD could not give such a Command to Abraham, because it would throw him into inextricable doubts concerning the Author of it, as Whether it proceeded from a good or an evil Being. Or if not so, but that he might be satisfied it came from GOD, it would then mislead him in his notions of the divine Attributes, and of the fundamental principles of Morality. Because, though the revocation of the Command prevented the homicide, yet the species of the action commanded not being condemned when it was revoked, Abraham and his Family must needs have thought HUMAN SACRIFICES grateful to the Almighty: for a simple revoking was not condemning; but would be more naturally thought a peculiar indulgence for a ready obedience. Thus, the pagan fable of Diana's substituting a Hind in the place of Iphigenia, did not make Idolaters believe that she therefore abhorred *Human Sacrifices*, they having before been persuaded of the contrary, from the Command of that Idol to offer up the daughter of Agamemnon."—This is the substance, only set in a clearer light, of all their dull cloudy dissertations on the case of Abraham *.

1. Let us see then how this case stood: GOD had been pleased to reveal to him his eternal purpose of

* See note [N] at the end of this Book.

making

making all mankind blessed through him: and likewise to confirm this promise, in a regular course of successive Revelations, each fuller and more explicit than the other. By this time we cannot but suppose the *Father of the Faithful* must, from the nature of the thing, be become very desirous of knowing the manner how this Blessing was to be brought about: A Mystery, if we will believe the Author of our Faith, that engaged the attention of other holy men, less immediately concerned than Abraham, and consequently less stimulated and excited by their curiosity:—*And* JESUS *turned to his Disciples, and said privately, Blessed are the eyes which see the things which ye see. For I tell you that many Prophets and Kings have* DESIRED *to see those things which ye see, and have not seen them, and to hear those things which ye hear, and have not heard them**. But we are assured, by the same authority, that Abraham had, in fact, this very *desire* highly raised in him; *Abraham rejoiced to see my day* (says JESUS), *and he saw it, and was glad*; or rather, He rejoiced THAT HE MIGHT SEE, ΙΝΑ ΙΔΗι; which implies, that the period of his joy was in the space between the promise made, and the actual performance of it by the delivery of the Command; consequently, that it was granted at his earnest request †. In the second place, we shall shew from the same words, that Abraham, at the time when the Command was given, KNEW it to be that Revelation he had so earnestly requested. This is of the highest importance for the understanding the true nature of the Command.—*Your Father Abraham rejoiced to see my Day, and he saw it, and was glad.* Ἀβραὰμ ὁ πατὴρ ὑμῶν ἠγαλλιάσατο ΙΝΑ ΙΔΗι τὴν ἡμέραν τὴν ἐμὴν καὶ εἶδε, καὶ ἐχάρη. We have observed that ἵνα ἴδῃ, in strict propriety, signifies *that he might see.* The English phrase,—*to see,* is equivocal

* Luke x. 23, 24.

† Thus all the *Eastern* Versions understand it: *Syr.* Cupidus fuit videndi.—*Pers.* Cupidus erat ut videret.—*Arab.* Exoptavit videre.—*Æthiop.* Desideravit, gavisus est ut videret.

and

and ambiguous, and means either the present time, *that he then did see*; or the future, *that he was promised he should see:* but the original ἵνα ἴδῃ, has only the latter sense. So that the text plainly distinguishes two different periods of Joy; the first, when *it was promised he should see*; the second, when *he actually saw:* And it is to be observed* that, according to the exact use of the words, in ἀγαλλιάομαι is implied the tumultuous pleasure which the certain expectation of an approaching blessing, understood only in the gross, occasions; and, in χαίρω that calm and settled joy which arises from our knowledge, in the possession of it. But the Translators, perhaps, not apprehending that there was any time between the *Grant to see*, and the *actual seeing*, turned it, he *rejoiced to see*; as if it had been the Paraphrase of the Poet Nonnus,

ἰδεῖν ἠγάλλετο θυμῷ.

whereas this History of Abraham hath plainly three distinct periods. The first contains GOD's promise to grant Abraham's request, when he *rejoiced that he should see*; this, for reasons given above, was wisely omitted by the Historian: Within the second period was the delivery of the *Command*, with which Moses's account begins: And Abraham's Obedience, through which he *saw* CHRIST's *day and was glad*, includes the third†. Thus the Patriarch, we find, had a promise that his request should be granted; and, in regard to that promise, an *action* is commanded, which, at that time, was a common mode of information; Abraham therefore must needs know it was the very information so much requested, so graciously promised, and so impatiently expected. We conclude then, on the whole, that this *Command* being only the Grant of an earnest request, and known by Abraham, at the time of imposing, to be such Grant, he could not possibly have any doubt concerning the Author of it. He was soliciting the God

* See note [O] at the end of this Book.

† See note [P] at the end of this Book.

of

of Heaven to reveal to him the Mystery of Man's Redemption, and he received the information, in a Command to offer Isaac; a Revelation, that had the closest connexion with, and was the fullest completion of, the whole series of the preceding Revelations.

2. For, (as we shall now shew, in answer to the second part of the objection) the *Command* could occasion no mistakes concerning the divine Attributes; it being, as was said, only the conveyance of an information by *action* instead of *words*, in conformity to the common mode of converse in the more early times. This *action* therefore being mere scenery, had NO MORAL IMPORT; that is, it conveyed, or implied none of those *intentions* in him who commanded it, and in him who obeyed the Command, which go along with actions that have a *moral import**. Consequently the *injunction* and *obedience*, in an action which hath no such import, can no way affect the moral character of the persons concerned: and consequently, this Command could occasion no mistakes concerning the divine Attributes, with regard to GOD's delighting in human sacrifices. On the contrary, the very information conveyed by it, was the highest assurance to the person informed, of God's good-will towards man. Hence we see there was not the least occasion, when GOD *remitted* the offering of Isaac, that he should *formally condemn human sacrifices*, to prevent Abraham or his family's falling into an opinion, that such Sacrifices were not displeasing to him†, any more than for the Prophet Ahijah‡, when he had rent

* See note [Q] at the end of this Book.

† See note [R] at the end of this Book.

‡ "And it came to pass at that time, when Jeroboam went out of "Jerusalem, that the Prophet Ahijah the Shilonite found him in the "way: and he had clad himself with a new garment: and they two "were alone in the field. And Ahijah caught the new garment that "was on him, and rent it in twelve pieces. And he said to Jero-"boam, Take thee ten pieces; for thus saith the Lord the God of "Israel, Behold, I will rend the kingdom out of the hand of Solomon, "and will give ten tribes to thee." 1 Kings xi. 29—31. The circumstance of the *new garment* was not insignificant: It was to denote the Power of the kingdom at that time in its full strength and lustre:

Jeroboam's garment into twelve pieces to denote the ensuing division in the tribes of Israel, to deliver a moral precept against the sin of despoiling, and insulting our neighbour: For the command having *no moral import*, as being only an information by action, where one thing stood for the representative of another, all the consequence that could be deduced from it was only this, that the Son of GOD should be offered up for the sins of mankind: therefore the conceptions they had of HUMAN SACRIFICES, *after the command*, must needs be just the same with those they had *before*; and therefore, instruction, concerning the execrable nature of this Rite, was not only needless, but altogether beside the question.

But this assertion that A SCENICAL REPRESENTATION HAS NO MORAL IMPORT, having been misunderstood by many, and misrepresented by more (though nothing, as I then thought, could be clearer to men versed in moral matters) I shall beg leave to explain myself.—He who affirms that *a scenical representation has no moral import*, cannot possibly be understood to mean (if interpreted on the ordinary rules of Logic and Common sense) any thing else than that the representation or the feigned action has none of that *specific morality* which is in the real action. He can never be supposed to mean that such a representation could never, even by accident, give birth to a moral entity, of a different species; though it kept within, much less if it transgressed the bounds, of its scenical nature. Give me leave to explain this by an instance or two. The Tragic scene we will suppose to exhibit a Pagan story, in which a lewd Sacrifice to Venus is represented. Now I say this scenical representation has *no moral import*. But do I mean by this, that there was no immorality of any kind in the scene? Far from it. I only mean that that *specific immorality* was absent, which would have existed there, had the action been real and not feigned; I mean *idolatry*. Again, another set of Tragedians represent the

Conspiracy

Conspiracy against Julius Cæsar in the Senate-house. This, I say, has *no moral import:* for neither could the followers of Cæsar's Cause call these fictitious Conspirators, enemies to their country; nor could the warmest lovers of liberty call them patriots. But if in this representation, the Actors, instead of exhibiting an imaginary assassination, should commit a real one, on the body of the personated Cæsar, Who ever supposed that such a dramatic representation continued still to have *no moral import?* The men who committed the action dropt their personated, and assumed their real character, being instigated by interest, malice, or revenge; and only waited a fit opportunity to perpetrate their designs under the cover of a drama. Here indeed, the parallel ceases. The feigned Conspirators transgressed the bounds of a representation: while the real death of Isaac must be supposed to make part of the scenical representation, in the Command to Abraham. But it should have been considered, and was not, that I employed the principle of a *feigned representation's having no moral import*, to free the *Command* from the infidel objection that it was *an enjoined sacrifice*; not from the objection of its being *an enjoined death, simply:* For a *human Sacrifice commanded* was supposed to discredit Revelation, as giving too much countenance and encouragement to that horrid superstition; whereas, with regard to *a simple death commanded*, to justify this, I was ready to confide in the common argument of Divines, taken from God's sovereign right over his creatures: Whose power could instantaneously repair the loss, or whose goodness would abundantly reward the act of obedience. Yet the fair and candid Dr. Rutherforth represents my position of *a scenical representation's having no moral import*, to be the same with saying, that *though an action be ever so vile in itself, yet, if it be done to represent somewhat else, it loses its nature and becomes an indifferent one.*—Had I the presumption to believe, that any thing I could say would

better his heart or mend his head, I should recommend what hath been here said to his serious consideration.

3. And now we see the weakness of the third and last part of the Objection, which supposes this Command capable of affording a temptation to transgress the fundamental principles of the Law of Nature: one of which obliges us to cherish and protect our Offspring; and another, not to injure our Neighbour. For as, by the *Command*, Abraham understood the nature of man's Redemption; so, by the nature of that Redemption, he must know how the scenical representation was to end. Isaac, he saw, was made the person or representative of *Christ dying for us:* The Son of GOD, he knew, could not possibly lie under the *dominion of the grave.* Hence he must needs conclude one of these two things, either that GOD would stop his hand when he came to give the sacrificing stroke; or that, if the Revelation of this mystery was to be represented throughout in action, that then his Son, sacrificed under the person of CHRIST, was, under the same person, soon to be restored to life: *accounting* (as he well might) *that God was able to raise him up even from the dead*, as the Author of the Epistle to the Hebrews*, who seems to have been full of the idea here explained, assures us he did believe.

Now where was the temptation to violate any Principle of Morality in all this? The Law of Nature commands us to cherish and protect our offspring: Was that transgressed in giving a stroke whose hurt was presently to be repaired? Surely no more than if the stroke had been in vision. The Law of Nature forbids all injury to our Fellow-creature: And was he injured, who, by being thus highly honoured, in becoming the representative of the Son of God, was to share with his Father Abraham in the rewards of his obedience? But though, as we see, Abraham could have no struggles with himself, from any doubts that he might violate Morality in paying

* Chap. xi. ver. 19.

obedience

obedience to the Command; yet did the merit of that obedience, where the natural feelings were so alarmed, deserve all the encomiums bestowed upon it in Holy Writ. For, in expressing his extreme readiness to obey, he declared a full confidence in the promises of GOD.

From hence we may deduce these two corollaries.

1. That the noble Author of *the Characteristics* hath shewn as much ignorance as malevolence, when he supposed that Abraham's shewing no *extreme surprise on this trying Revelation* was from the favourable notion he had of Human Sacrifices, *so common amongst the inhabitants of Palestine and other neighbouring Nations**. For we see the reason, why Abraham, instead of being under any *extreme surprise*, was (as JESUS assures us) under an *extreme joy*, was because he understood the *Command* to be a communication of that Mystery in which he had so earnestly requested to participate; and, consequently, that Isaac must needs, at length, come safe and unhurt from that scenical representation, in which he bore the principal part.

2. That Sir John Marsham's suspicion of Abraham's being struck by a superstitious imagination † is as groundless, as it is injurious to the holy Patriarch. Nay, the very examples he gives might have shewn him the folly of such insinuations: For, according to his inferences, Human Sacrifices were never offered but in cases of great distress: Now Abraham was at this time in a full state of peace, security, and affluence.

Thus, we presume, it appears that this *Command* was a mere *information by action:* and that, when regarded

* See note [S] at the end of this Book.

† —*Ex istis satius est colligere hanc Abrahami tentationem non fuisse* κεκαινουργημένην φράξιν, *actionem innovatam; non recens excogitatam, sed ad pristinos Cananæorum mores designatam. Horrendi sacrificii usum apud Phœnices frequentem indicat Porphyrius:* "Phœnices, "*inquit*, in magnis periculis ex bello, fame, pestilentia, clarissimorum "aliquem ad id suffragiis publicis delectum, sacrificabant Saturno. "Et victimarum talium plena est Sanchoniathonis historia Phœni- "cice scripta, quam Philo Biblius Græce interpretatus est libris "octo." Canon. Chron. p. 79.

in this view, all the objections against GOD's giving it to Abraham are absolutely enervated and overthrown.

For thus stands the case. If the trial of Abraham's faith and obedience were the commanding a real sacrifice, then was Abraham an *Agent*, and not a bare *Instrument*; and then it might be pretended that God commanded an human *agent* to act against humanity. And his right over his Creatures cannot solve the difficulty, as it may when he employs a mere instrument to perform his Will upon them. But if the trial were only the commanding a scenical representation, the command had *no moral import*; and consequently Abraham was not put upon any thing morally wrong; as is the offering up a human sacrifice.

I have transcribed into the notes, as I have gone along, some of the most considerable Objections my Adversaries have been able to oppose to this interpretation of the COMMAND TO ABRAHAM: which, I presume, when fairly considered, will be no light confirmation of it. But, as I have no notions to advance, not founded in a sincere desire to find out, and do honour to, Truth, I would by no means take advantage of an Adversary's weakness to recommend them to the public favour. I hold it not honest, therefore, to conceal the force of an Objection which I myself have to offer, by far more plausible than any that these learned Divines have urged against it. The objection is this, "That it is difficult to conceive why a CIRCUMSTANCE of such importance to Revelation, which removes one of the strongest arguments against its truth, and at the same time manifests a REAL CONNEXION between the two Dispensations of it, should never be directly and minutely explained and insisted on by the Writers of the New Testament, though Abraham's Historian might have had his reasons for concealing it." Now, to my own Objection, I suppose, I may have leave to reply, That many truths of great importance, for the support of Religion, against Infidelity, were taught by

Jesus

Jesus to his Disciples (amongst which, I reckon *this Interpretation* to be one) which never came down, by their conveyance, to the Church. But being, by the assistance of God's Holy Spirit, discoverable by those who devote themselves to the study of the Scriptures with a pure mind, have, for the wise ends of Providence (many of which are inscrutable to us) been left for the industry of men to find out: that, as occasion required, every Age might supply new evidence of God's Truth, to *put to silence the ignorance of foolish men:* and in proportion as the powers of Darkness prevailed, so might the Gospel-light break out again with fresh splendor to curb and repress them. In support of what is here said, I beg the Reader to reflect on what is told us by the Evangelist, of the conversation between JESUS (after his Resurrection) and the two Disciples journeying to Emmaus; where their Master says unto them, *O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the Prophets have spoken! Ought not* Christ *to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory? And beginning at* MOSES *and all the Prophets,* HE EXPOUNDED UNTO THEM *the things concerning himself**. Now, who can doubt but that many things were at this time revealed, which, had they been delivered down to Posterity, in Writing, would have greatly contributed to the improvement of Eusebius's *Evangelical Demonstration?* Yet hath Providence thought fit to order matters otherwise. But, that the Apostles used, and made a good use too, of those EXPOSITIONS, long since forgotten and lost, we have great reason to believe from their amazing success in the conversion of the world, by such an application of *Moses and the Prophets, to Christ.* And if I be not much deceived, amongst the Truths thus inforced, *that*, which I presume to have discovered in the *Command to Abraham*, held no inferior place. Let the unprejudiced Reader judge. St. PAUL, making his Apology before king

* Luke xxiv. 25, 26, 27.

Agrippa, concludes his Defence in these words: *Having therefore obtained help of God, I continue unto this day witnessing both to small and great, saying none other things than those which the Prophets and* MOSES DID SAY SHOULD COME: *that* CHRIST *should suffer, and that he should be the first that should rise from the dead**. The *Greek* is rather stronger, in predicating this circumstance of Moses,—ὧν τε οἱ προφῆται ἐλάλησαν μελλόντων γίνεσθαι, ΚΑΙ ΜΩΣΗΣ. Now where, let me ask, in all his Writings, but in the *Command to Abraham*, is there the least trace of any such circumstance, as *that Christ should suffer, and that he should be the first that should rise from the dead?* Nor is it to be found there, unless the *Command* be understood in the sense I have given to it.——

But this is the state in which it hath pleased Providence to place the Church of Christ: With abundant evidence in hand, to support itself against the attacks of Infidelity; yet much of this divine Treasure left sealed up, to exercise our *Faith*, and (in time of need) to excite our *Industry:* for it was not the intent of Providence that one of these virtues should thrive at the expence of the other; but that Industry should as well be rewarded by a successful search, as Faith, by *peace in believing*. Therefore when my learned Adversary†, in order, I will believe, to advance the Christian Faith, would discourage Christian Industry, by calumniating, and rendering suspected what he is pleased to call EXPERIMENTS in Religion, it is, I am afraid, at best but a *Zeal without knowledge*. Indeed, M. Pascal ascribes this contempt of *experiments* to a different cause—"Ceux qui sont capables de inventer sont rares," says he. "Ceux qui n'inventent point sont en plus grand nombre, & par consequent, les plus fortes; et voila pourquoi, lors que les Inventeurs cherchent la

* Acts xxvi. 22, 23; and to the same purpose, xiii. 31.

† Dr. Stebbing.

gloire

gloire qu'ils meritent, tout ce qu'ils y gagnent, c'est qu'on les traite de VISIONNAIRES." It is true, if men will come to the study of Scripture with unwashen hands, that is, without a due reverence for the dignity of those sacred Volumes, or, which is as ill, with unpurged heads, that is, heads stuffed with bigot systems, or made giddy with cabalistic flights, they will deserve that title which Pascal observes is so unjustly given to those who deserve best of the Public.

But to return to those with whom I have principal concern. I make no question but my Freethinking Adversaries, to whose temper and talents I am no stranger, will be ready to object,

I. "That the giving a solution of a difficulty in the *Old* Testament by the assistance of the *New*, considered together as making up one intire Dispensation, is an unfair way of arguing against an Unbeliever: who supposing both the Jewish and Christian Religions to be *false*, of consequence supposes them to be *independent* on one another; and that this pretended relation was a contrivance of the Authors of the later imposture to give it strength, by grafting the young shoot into the trunk of an old flourishing Superstition. Therefore, will they say, if we would argue with success against them, we must seek a solution of their difficulties in that Religion alone, from which they arise."—Thus I may suppose them to argue. And I apprehend they will have no reason to say I have put worse arguments into their mouths than they are accustomed to employ against Revelation.

I reply then, that it will admit of no dispute, but that, if they may have the liberty of turning JUDAISM and CHRISTIANITY into two Phantoms of their own devising, they will have a very easy victory over Both. This is an old trick, and has been often tried with success. By this slight-of-hand conveyance TINDAL hath juggled fools out of their Religion. For, in a well-known book written by him against Revelation, he hath taken advantage

vantage of the indiscretion of some late Divines to lay it down as a Principle, *that Christianity is* ONLY *a republication of the Religion of Nature:* The consequence of which is, that CHRISTIANITY and JUDAISM are *independent* Institutions. But sure the Deist is not to obtrude his own Inventions, in the place of those Religions he endeavours to overthrow. Much less is he to *beg the question* of their falsity; as the laying it down that the Jewish and Christian are two *independent* Religions, certainly is: because Christianity claims many of its numerous Titles to divinity from and under Judaism. If therefore Deists will not, yet Christians of necessity must take their Religion as they find it. And if they will remove objections to either Economy, they must reason on the Principle of *Dependency.* And while they do so, their reasonings will not only be fair and logical, but every solution, on such a Principle, will, besides its determination on the particular point in question, be a new proof of the divinity of Both, in general; because such a relation, connexion, and dependency between two Religions of so distant times, could not come about by chance, or by human contrivance, but must needs be the effect of Divine prevision. For a Deist, therefore, to bid us remove his objections on the principle of *independency,* is to bid us prove our religion *true* on a principle that implies its *falsehood*; the New Testament giving us no other idea of Christianity than as of a Religion dependent on, connected with, and the completion of Judaism.

But now suppose us to be in this excess of complaisance for our Adversaries; and then see whether the ingenuity of their acceptance would not equal the reasonableness of their demand. Without doubt, were we once so foolish to swallow their Chimeras for the heavenly Manna of Revelation, we should have them amongst the first to cry out upon the prevarication. I speak not this at random. The fact hath already happened. Certain

tain advocates of Religion, unable to reconcile to their notions of logic, the sense of some Prophecies in the Old Testament, as explained in the *applications* of the Writers of the New, thought it best to throw aside the care of the JEWISH RELIGION, (a burden which they could as ill bear as the rebellious Israelites themselves) and try to support the CHRISTIAN, by proving its divine Original, independently and from itself alone. Upon this Mr. COLLINS (for I have chosen to instance in these two general dealers in Freethinking; the small retailers of it vanishing as fast as they appear; for who now talks of *Blount* or *Coward?* or who hereafter will talk of *Strutt* or *Morgan?* *) that the world may see how little they agreed about their own principles, or rather how little regard they paid to any principles at all; Mr. Collins, I say, wrote a book to exclaim against our ill faith; and to remind us of, and to prove to us, the inseparable connexion between the Old and New Testament. This was no unseasonable reproof, howsoever intended, for so egregious a folly. I will endeavour to profit by it; and manage this Controversy on their own terms. For whatever prevarication appeared in the Objectors, I conceived they had demanded no more than what they might reasonably expect. But the advantages arising to us from this management soon made them draw back, and retract what they had demanded; and now they chicane with us for calling in the assistance of the New Testament to repel their attacks upon the Old †; while, at the same time, they think themselves at liberty to use the assistance of the Old to overthrow the New. Let the Friends of Revelation, however, constantly and uniformly hold the inseparable connexion between the two Dispensations; and then, let our Enemies, if they will, as they fairly may, take all the advantages they fancy they have against us, from the necessity we lie under of so doing.

* See note [T] at the end of this Book.

† See note [U] at the end of this Book.

In a word, We give them Judaism and Christianity as Religions equally from Heaven; with that reciprocal dependence on each other, which arises between two things bearing the mutual relation of *foundation* and *superstructure*. They have it in their choice to oppose our pretensions, either by disputing with us that dependency, or raising difficulties on the foot of it. But while they only *suppose* it visionary; and then argue against each Religion on that supposition, they only beg the question. And while they do that, we keep within the rules of good logic, when we remove their objections on that principle of *dependency* laid down in Scripture. This restrictive rule of interpretation being however still observed, That, in explaining any difficulty in the Old Testament, we never, on pretence of such *dependency*, forsake the genius and manners of the times in question, and serve ourselves of those of the later Christian period, as Collins (whether truly or no, let Them look to, who are concerned in it) upbraids some defenders of Christianity for doing. This rule is here, I presume, observed with sufficient exactness; the foundation of my interpretation of the *Command* being that ancient mode of converse, so much at that time in use, of *conversing by actions*.

II. But the Adversaries of Revelation, how easily soever they may be confuted, are not so easily silenced. They are ready to object, that we fly to the old exploded refuge of a TYPE, which the Author of *the Grounds and Reasons of the Christian Religion* hath shewn to be *visionary* and *senseless*; the mere illogical whimsy of Cabalistic Jews. To this I answer,

1. They are doubly mistaken. This interpretation is not founded in any *typical* sense whatsoever; the person of Isaac on the Mount being no more a *Type* of Christ than the six letters that compose the name are a *Type* of him; but only an arbitrary mark to stand for the idea of *Christ*, as that word does. So that their cry against

Types,

Types, whatever force it may have, does not at all affect this interpretation.

2. But, secondly, I say, A TYPE is neither *visionary*, nor *senseless*, notwithstanding the disgrace which this mode of information hath undergone by the mad abuses of Fanaticism and Superstition. On the contrary, I hold it to be a just and reasonable manner of denoting one thing by another: not the creature of the imagination, made out of nothing to serve a turn; but as natural and apposite a figure as any employed in human converse. For *Types* arose from that original mode of communication, the *conversing by actions:* the difference there is between these two modes of information being only this, that, where the action is *simply significative*, it has *no moral import:* For example, when Ezekiel is bid to *shave his beard, to weigh the hair in balances, to divide it into three parts, to burn one, to strike another with a knife, and to scatter the third part in the wind**, this action having *no moral import* is merely *significative* of information given. But when the Israelites are commanded to take a *male lamb without blemish, and the whole assembly of the congregation to kill it, and to sprinkle the blood upon the door-posts* †, this action having a *moral import* as being a religious Rite, and, at the same time, representative of something future, is properly *typical.* Hence arose the mistake of the Interpreters of the *Command* to offer Isaac. These men supposing the action commanded to have a *moral import*, as being only for a trial of Abraham's faith; and, at the same time, seeing in it the most exact resemblance of the death of CHRIST, very wrongly concluded that action to be *typical* which was merely *significative:* and by this means, leaving in the action a *moral import*, subjected it to all those cavils of infidelity, which, by taking away all *moral import*, as not belonging to it, are here entirely evaded.

* Ezek. v. 1, 2. † Exod. xii. 5, 6, 7.

But it being of the highest importance to Revelation in general, and not a little conducive to the support of our arguments for the Divine Legation of Moses in particular, to shew the logical truth and propriety of *Types* in *action*, and *Secondary senses* in *speech*, I shall take the present opportunity to sift this matter to the bottom. For having occasionally shewn, in several parts of the preceding Discourse, that the references in the LAW to the GOSPEL are in *typical representations*, and *secondary senses*; and the truth of Christianity depending on the real relation (which is to be discovered by such references) between the two Dispensations, it will be incumbent on me to prove the logical truth and propriety of TYPES in action, and SECONDARY SENSES in speech.

And I enter on this subject with the greater pleasure, as one of the most plausible books ever written, or likely to be written, against Christianity, is intirely levelled at them. In this enquiry I shall pursue the same method I have hitherto taken with unbelieving Writers; examine only the grounds and principles on which they go; and having removed and overthrown these, in as few words as I am able, leave the superstructure to support itself, as it may.

SECT. VI.

THE book I speak of is entitled, "A Discourse of the Grounds and Reasons of the Christian Religion," written, as is generally supposed, by Mr. Collins; a Writer, whose dexterity in the arts of Controversy was so remarkably contrasted by his abilities in reasoning and literature, as to be ever putting one in mind of what travellers tell us of the genius of the proper Indians, who, although the veriest bunglers in all the fine arts of manual operation, yet excel every body in slight of hand and the delusive feats of activity.

The purpose of his book is to prove that JESUS was an impostor: and his grand argument stands thus,—

" JESUS (as he shews) claims under the promised Messiah of the Jews; and proposes himself as the Deliverer prophesied of in their sacred Books; yet (as he attempts to shew) none of these Prophesies can be understood of JESUS but in a *secondary sense* only; now a secondary sense (as he pretends) is fanatical, chimerical, and contrary to all scholastic rules of interpretation: Consequently, JESUS not being prophesied of in the Jewish Writings, his pretensions are false and groundless."—His conclusion, the reader sees, stands on the joint support of these two Propositions, *That there is no Jewish Prophecy which relates to* JESUS *in a primary sense*; and *That a secondary sense is enthusiastical and unscholastic.* If either of these fail, his phantom of a conclusion sinks again into nothing.

Though I shall not omit occasionally to confute the first, yet it is the falsehood of the second I am principally concerned to expose—That there are Jewish prophecies which relate to JESUS in their direct and primary sense, hath been proved with much force of reason and learning; But, that *secondary Prophecies are not enthusiastical and unscholastic*, hath not been shewn and insisted on, by the Writers on this question, with the same advantage. The truth is, the nature of a DOUBLE SENSE in Prophecies hath been so little seen or enquired into, that some Divines, who agree in nothing else, have yet agreed to second this assertion of Mr. Collins, and with the same frankness and confidence to pronounce that a *double sense* is indeed enthusiastical and unscholastic. To put a stop therefore to this growing evil, sown first by SOCINUS, and since become so pestilent to Revelation, is not amongst the last purposes of the following discourse.

I. It hath been shewn, that one of the most ancient and simple Modes of human converse was communicating the conceptions by an expressive ACTION. As this was of familiar use in Civil matters, it was natural to carry

it

it into Religious. Hence, we see God giving his instructions to the Prophet, and the Prophet delivering God's commands to the People, in this very manner. Thus far the nature of the action, both in civil and religious matters, is exactly the same.

But in Religion it sometimes happens that a STANDING Information is necessary, and there the Action must be continually repeated: This is done by holding out the particular Truth (thus to be preserved) in a religious *Rite*. Here then the Action begins to change its nature; and, from a mere significative mark, of only *arbitrary import* like words or letters, becomes an action of *moral import*, and acquires the new name of TYPE. Thus GOD, intending to record the future sacrifice of CHRIST in Action, did it by the periodic Sacrifice of a *lamb without blemish*. This was not *merely* and so DIRECTLY *significative* of CHRIST (like the Command to Abraham); but being a religious Rite, and so having a *moral import*, it was *typical*, though NOT DIRECTLY *significative*, of him. The very same may be said of the Temporal rewards of the Law; they were properly *typical* of the Spiritual rewards of the Gospel, and had a *moral import* of their own, as being the real sanction of the Law.

Again, It hath been shewn*, how, in the gradual cultivation of Speech, the expression by *Action* was improved and refined into an ALLEGORY or *Parable*; in which the words carry a double meaning; having, besides their obvious sense which serves only for the Envelope, one more material, and hidden. With this figure of speech all the moral writings of Antiquity abound. But when this figure is transferred from Civil use to Religious, and employed in the writings of inspired Men, to convey information of particular circumstances in two distinct Dispensations, to a people who had an equal concern in both, it is then what we call a DOUBLE SENSE; and

* In the preceding volume.

undergoes

undergoes the very same change of its nature that an *expressive action* underwent when converted into a *Type*; that is, both the meanings, in the DOUBLE SENSE, are of *moral import*; whereas in the *Allegory*, one only of the meanings is so: And this (which arises out of the very nature of their conversion, from Civil to Religious matters) is the only difference between *expressive actions* and TYPES; and between *allegories* and DOUBLE SENSES.

From hence it appears, that as TYPES are only religious *expressive Actions*, and DOUBLE SENSES only religious *Allegories*, and neither receive any change but what the very manner of bringing those *Civil* figures into *Religion* necessarily induces, they must needs have, in this their tralatitious state, the same LOGICAL FITNESS they had in their natural*. Therefore as *expressive actions*, and *Allegories*, in Civil discourses, are esteemed proper and reasonable modes of information, so must TYPES and DOUBLE SENSES in Religious; for the end of both is the same, namely, COMMUNICATION OF KNOWLEDGE. The consequence of this is, that Mr. Collins's proposition, that *a secondary or double sense is enthusiastical and unscholastic* (the necessary support of his grand Argument) is entirely overthrown.

This is the true and simple origin of TYPES and DOUBLE SENSES; which our adversaries, through ignorance of the rise and progress of Speech, and unacquaintance with ancient Manners, have insolently treated as the issue of distempered brains, and the fondlings of Visionaries and Enthusiasts.

II. Having thus shewn their *logical propriety*, or that they are rational Modes of information, I come now to vindicate their *Religious use*, and to shew that they are well suited to *that* Religion in which we find them employed. An Objection which, I conceive, may be made to this use, will lead us naturally into our Argument.

* See note [X] at the end of this Book.

The objection is this: "It hath been shewn*, that these oblique Modes of converse, though at first invented out of *necessity*, for general information, were employed, at length, to a *mysterious secretion of knowledge*; which though it might be expedient, useful, and even necessary both in CIVIL MATTERS and in FALSE RELIGION, could never be so in MORAL MATTERS, and in THE TRUE RELIGION; for this having nothing to hide from any of its followers, *Types* and *Double senses* (the same mysterious conveyance of knowledge in Sacred matters, which *Allegoric words* or *Actions* are in Civil) were altogether unfit to be employed in it."

To this I answer, The JEWISH RELIGION, in which these *Types* and *Secondary senses* are to be found, was given to one single People only; just as the CHRISTIAN is offered to all Mankind: Now the Christian, as Mr. Collins† himself labours to prove, professes to be grounded on the Jewish. If therefore Christianity was not only professedly, but really grounded on Judaism (and the supposition is strictly logical in a defence of *Types* and *Double senses*, whose reality depends on the reality of that relation) then Judaism was *preparatory* to Christianity, and Christianity the *ultimate end* of Judaism: But it is not to be supposed that there should be an intire *silence* concerning this ultimate Religion during the preparatory, when the *notice* of it was not only highly proper, but very expedient: 1. First, to draw

* In the preceding volume.

† "*Christianity* is founded on *Judaism*, and the New Testament "on the Old; and JESUS is the person said in the New Testament "to be promised in the Old, under the character of the MESSIAH of "the *Jews*, who, as such only, claims the obedience and submission "of the world. Accordingly it is the design of the authors of the "*New*, to prove all the parts of *Christianity* from the Old Testament, "which is said to contain *the words of eternal life*, and to represent "JESUS and his apostles as *fulfilling* by their mission, doctrines, and "works, the predictions of the *Prophets*; the historical parts of the "Old Testament, and the Jewish Law; which last is expressly said "to *prophesy* of, or *testify* Christianity." Grounds and Reasons, &c. pp. 4, 5.

those

those under the preparatory Religion, by just degrees to the ultimate; a provision the more necessary, as the nature and genius of the two Religions were different, the one carnal, the other spiritual: 2. Secondly, to afford convincing evidence to future Ages, of the truth of that Ultimate Religion; which evidence, a circumstantial prediction of its advent and nature so long beforehand, effectually does afford*. The Ultimate Religion therefore must have had some notice given of it, in the Preparatory; and nothing was better fitted for this purpose than the hyperbolical genius of the Eastern Speech. Thus, when Isaiah says, *Unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given, and the government shall be upon his shoulder: And his name shall be called, Wonderful, Counsellor, The Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace*; Mr. Collins observes, it is the eastern hyperbole which prevents our seeing that a Jewish Monarch is literally and directly spoken of. Should we allow this, yet we still see, that such a language was admirably fitted to connect together the *first* and *second* Senses: the *hyperbole* becoming a *simple speech*, when transferred from a Jewish Monarch to the monarch of the world.

Our next inquiry will be, *in what manner* this notice must needs be given. Now the nature of the thing shews us it could not be directly and openly; so as to be understood by the People, at the time of giving: because this would have defeated God's intermediate purpose; which was to train them, by a long discipline, under his preparatory Dispensation. For, this being a Religion founded only on *temporal Sanctions*, and burdened with a *minute and tiresome Ritual*, had the People known it to be only preparatory to another, founded on *better Promises* and easier Observances, they would never have born the yoke of the Law, but would have shaken off their subjection to Moses before the *fulness of Time* had

* See note [Y] at the end of this Book.

brought their spiritual Deliverer amongst them; as, without this knowledge, they were but too apt to do, on every imaginary prospect of advantage. But St. CHRYSOSTOM will inforce this observation with more advantage. "Had "the Jews (says he) been taught from the beginning "that their Law was temporary and to have an end, "they would have certainly despised it. On this ac- "count, it seemed good to the divine Wisdom to throw "a veil of obscurity over the Prophecies which related "to the Christian Dispensation *." This information, therefore, was to be delivered with caution; and conveyed under the covert language of their present Economy. Hence arose the fit and necessary use of TYPES and SECONDARY SENSES. For the only safe and lasting means of conveyance were their PUBLIC RITUAL, and the WRITINGS OF THE PROPHETS. And a *Speaking action*, and an *Allegoric speech*, when thus employed, had all the secrecy that the occasion required. We have observed, that in the simpler use of speaking by *Action*, the Action itself hath no *moral import*: and so, the information having but one moral meaning, that which it conveys is clear and intelligible. But where a Rite of Religion is used for this *Speaking action*, there the action hath a *moral import*; and so the information having two moral meanings, that which it conveys is more obscure and mysterious. Hence it appears that this mode of *speaking by action*, called a TYPE, is exactly fitted for the information in question. Just so it is again with the SECONDARY SENSE: In the *mere allegory*, the representing image has no moral import: in the *secondary sense*, for a contrary reason (which the very term imports), the representing image hath a moral import; and so, acquires the same *fitting obscurity* with information by *Types*. For the *typical Ritual*, and the *double Prophecy*, had each its obvious sense in the present nature and future fortune of the Jewish Religion

* Homilia prima, De prophetarum obscuritate.

and

and Republic. And here we are easily led into the essential difference (so much to the honour of Revelation) between the Pagan Oracles or Prophecies, and the Jewish. The obscurity of the Pagan arose from the *ambiguity, equivocation or jargon* OF EXPRESSION; the obscurity of the Jewish from *the figurative representation* OF THINGS. The First (independent of any other Religion) proceeded from ignorance of futurity; the Latter, dependent on the Christian, proceeded from the necessity that those to whom the Prophecies were delivered should not have too full a knowledge of them.

Dr. Middleton, indeed, would fain persuade us, that the *Oracles*, or, as he chuses to call them, the *Prophecies* of the Pythian Apollo, were neither better nor worse, but exactly of the same absurd construction with the *Scripture Prophecies*. He would hardly venture to controvert what I have said of their logical fitness and propriety, as a mode of information in the abstract, because this would shew him ignorant of the nature and progress of human converse. Much less, I suppose, would he say, that this mode of information was not suited to the genius of the Jewish Religion; since he owns *that* to be only a preparatory System calculated to open and to prepare the way for one more perfect; and consequently, that it must be so contrived as to *connect*, and at the same time to *hide* from the vulgar eye, the two parts of the Dispensation, and the relation they have to one another. Now there is no conceivable way of doing this but by *types* and *secondary senses*. What then occasioned this insult upon them? That which supports all our free Writers in their contemptuous treatment of Religion, their mistaking the ABUSE of the thing for the thing ITSELF; and giving the interpretations of men, or the Doctrines of Churches, for Articles of faith or Scripture history. What hath been here said will shew the extreme weakness of this ingenious man's parallel between the Scripture Prophecies and the Oracles

of the Pythian Apollo.—"The PROPHECIES of the Pythian Apollo (says he) were indeed obscure, equivocal and ambiguous, admitting not only different but contrary senses; so that the character here given of the Scripture Prophecies was undoubtedly true of them, *that no event could restrain them to one determinate sense, when they were originally capable of many.* For if the obvious sense failed, as it often did, to the ruin of those who acted upon it, there was another always in reserve, to secure the veracity of the Oracle: till this very character of its ambiguous and ænigmatical senses, confirmed by constant observation, gradually sunk its credit, and finally detected the imposture*." *The Prophecies of the Pythian Apollo were obscure, equivocal and ambiguous. And this* (says he) *was the character of the Scripture Prophecies.* Just otherwise, as is seen above. Scripture Prophecies were *obscure;* but the obscurity arose neither from *equivocation* nor *ambiguity* (which two qualities proceed from the EXPRESSION) but from *the figurative representation of* THINGS. So that the *obscurity,* which the Pythian Oracle and the Scripture Prophecies had in common, arising from the most different grounds, the character given of the Oracles, *that no event could restrain them to one determinate sense when they were originally capable of many,* by no means belongs to the Scripture Prophecies, whatever the men he writes against (who appear to know as little of the DOUBLE SENSE of Prophecies as himself) might imagine. For though *equivocal and ambiguous* EXPRESSION may make a speech or writing, where the objects are unconfined, capable of *many senses,* yet a *figurative representation of* THINGS can give no more senses than *two* to the obscurest Prophecy. Hence it will follow, that while the expedient in supporting the Pythian Oracles, by having a sense always in

* Examination of the Bishop of London's Discourses on Prophecy, &c. pp. 89, 90.

reserve

reserve to satisfy the inquirer, *would gradually sink their credit, and finally detect the imposture*; the discovery of a SECONDARY SENSE of Prophecy, relative to the completory Dispensation, will necessarily tend to confirm and establish the divine origin of Scripture Prophecy.

Such was the wonderful economy of divine Wisdom, in connecting together two dependent Religions, the parts of one grand Dispensation: by this means, making one preparatory of the other; and each mutually to reflect light upon the other. Hence we see the desperate humour of that learned man, though very zealous Christian*, who, because most of the prophecies relating to JESUS, in the Old Testament, are of the nature described above, took it into his head that the Bible was corrupted by the enemies of JESUS. Whereas, on the very supposition of a mediate and an ultimate Religion, which this good man held, the main body of Prophecies in the Old Testament relating to the New must, according to all our ideas of fitness and expediency, needs be prophecies with a DOUBLE SENSE. But it is the usual support of folly to throw its distresses upon knavery. And thus, as we observed, the Mahometan likewise, who pretends to claim under the Jewish religion, not finding the doctrine of a *future state of rewards and punishments* in the Law, is as positive that the Jews have corrupted their own scriptures in pure spite to his great Prophet †.

III. Having thus shewn the reasonable use and great expediency of these modes of sacred information, under the Jewish Economy; the next question is, Whether they be indeed there. This we shall endeavour to shew. —And that none of the common prejudices may lie against our reasoning, the example given shall be of TYPES and DOUBLE SENSES employed even in subjects relating to the *Jewish dispensation only*.

1. The whole ordinance of the *passover* was a TYPE of the *redemption from Egypt*. The striking the blood

* Mr. Whiston. † See note [Z] at the end of this Book.

on the side-posts, the eating flesh with unleavened bread and bitter herbs, and in a posture of departure and expedition, were all significative of their bondage and deliverance. This will admit of no doubt, because the Institutor himself has thus explained the *Type—And thou shalt shew thy son* (says he) *in that day, saying, This is done because of that which the Lord did unto me when I came forth out of* Egypt. *And it shall be for a sign unto thee upon thine hand, and for a memorial between thine eyes; that the Lord's law may be in thy mouth: for with a strong hand hath the Lord brought thee out of* Egypt. *Thou shalt therefore keep this ordinance in his season from year to year* *. As therefore it was of the genius of these holy Rites to be *Typical* or significative of God's past, present, and future dispensations to his people, we cannot in the least doubt, but that *Moses*, had he not been restrained by those important considerations explained above, would have told them that the *sacrifice of the lamb without blemish* was a *Type*, a sign or memorial of THE DEATH OF CHRIST.

2. With regard to DOUBLE SENSES, take this instance from Joel: who, in his prediction of an approaching ravage by *Locusts*, foretells likewise, in the same words, a succeeding desolation by the *Assyrian army*. For we are to observe that this was GOD's method both in warning and in punishing a sinful people. Thus, when the *seven nations* for their exceeding wickedness were to be exterminated, GOD promises his chosen people to *send hornets before them, which should drive out the Hivite, the Canaanite, and the Hittite from before them* †. Now Joel, under one and the same Prophecy, contained

* Exod. xiii. 8, & seq.

† Exod. xxiii. 23. This, the author of the book called the "Wisdom of Solomon" admirably paraphrases:—"For it was "thy will to destroy by the hands of our fathers both those old "inhabitants of thy holy land, whom thou hatedst for doing most "odious works of witchcrafts, and wicked sacrifices; and also those "merciless murderers of children, and devourers of man's flesh, "and

contained in the first and second Chapters of his book, foretells, as we say, both these plagues; the *locusts* in the *primary* sense, and the *Assyrian army* in the *secondary*—"Awake, ye drunkards, and weep; and howl " all ye drinkers of wine, because of the new wine, for it " is cut off from your mouth. For a nation is come up " upon my land, strong, and without number, whose " teeth are the teeth of a lion, and he hath the cheek- " teeth of a great lion. He hath laid my vine waste, " and barked my fig-tree: he hath made it clean bare, " and cast it away: the branches thereof are made " white...The field is wasted, the land mourneth; for " the corn is wasted: the new wine is dried up, the " oil languisheth. Be ye ashamed, O ye husbandmen; " howl, O ye vine-dressers, for the wheat and for the " barley; because the harvest of the field is perished*.— " Blow ye the trumpet in *Zion*, and sound an alarm in " my holy mountain: Let all the inhabitants of the " land tremble: for the day of the Lord cometh, for it is " nigh at hand; A day of darkness and of gloominess, " a day of clouds and of thick darkness, as the morning " spread upon the mountains: a great people and a " strong; there hath not been ever the like—A fire de- " voureth before them, and behind them a flame burneth: " the land is as the garden of *Eden* before them, and " behind them a desolate wilderness; yea, and nothing " shall

" and the feasts of blood, with their priests out of the midst of their " idolatrous crew, and the parents that killed, with their own hands, " souls destitute of help: That the land which thou esteemedst " above all other might receive a worthy colony of GOD's children. " Nevertheless even *those* thou sparedst as men, *and didst send wasps*, " *forerunners of thine host*, to destroy them by little and little. Not " that thou wast unable to bring the ungodly under the hand of the " righteous in battle, or to destroy them at once with *cruel beasts*, " or with one rough word: But executing thy judgments upon them " by little and little, thou gavest them place of repentance, not " being ignorant that they were a naughty generation, and that " their malice was bred in them, and that their cogitation would " never be changed." Chap. xii. ver. 3, & seq.

* Chap. i. ver. 5, & seq.

"shall escape them. The appearance of them is as "the appearance of horses; and as horsemen, so shall "they run. Like the noise of chariots on the tops of "mountains shall they leap, like the noise of a flame "of fire that devoureth the stubble, as a strong people "set in battle array. Before their face the people shall "be much pained: all faces shall gather blackness. "They shall run like mighty men, they shall climb the "wall like men of war; and they shall march every one "on his ways, and they shall not break their ranks. "Neither shall one thrust another, they shall walk every "one in his path: and when they fall upon the sword, "they shall not be wounded. They shall run to and "fro in the city; they shall run upon the wall, they "shall climb up upon the houses; they shall enter in at "the windows like a thief. The earth shall quake before "them, the heavens shall tremble; the sun and the "moon shall be dark, and the stars shall withdraw their "shining *."

The fine conversion of the subjects is remarkable. The prophecy is delivered in the first chapter,—*Awake, ye drunkards*, &c. and repeated in the second—*Blow ye the trumpet in Zion*, &c. In the first chapter, the LOCUSTS are described as a *people*;—*For a nation is come up upon my land, strong and without number.* But, that we may not be mistaken in the PRIMARY sense, namely the plague of locusts, the ravages described are the ravages of insects: *They lay waste the vine, they bark the fig-tree, make the branches clean bare, and wither the corn and fruit-trees.* In the second chapter, the hostile PEOPLE are described as *locusts*:—AS THE MORNING SPREAD UPON THE MOUNTAINS. *The appearance of them is* AS *the appearance of horses, and* AS *horsemen so shall they run,* AS *a strong people set in battle array. They shall run* LIKE *mighty men, they shall climb the wall* LIKE *men of war.* But that we may

* Chap. ii. ver. 1 to 10.

not

not mistake the SECONDARY sense, namely the invasion of a foreign enemy, they are compared, we see, to a mighty army. This art, in the contexture of the Prophecy, is truly divine; and renders all chicane to evade a *double sense* ineffectual. For in some places of this Prophecy, *dearth by insects* must needs be understood; in others, *desolation by war*. So that both senses are of necessity to be admitted. And here let me observe, that had the Commentators on this Prophecy but attended to the nature of the *double sense*, they would not have suffered themselves to be so embarrassed; nor have spent so much time in freeing the Prophet from an imaginary embarras (though at the expence of the context) on account of the same Prophecy's having in one part that signification *primary*, which, in another, is *secondary*. A circumstance so far from making an inaccuracy, that it gives the highest elegance to the discourse; and joins the *two* senses so closely as to obviate all pretence for a division, to the injury of the Holy Spirit. Here then we have a DOUBLE SENSE, not arising from the interpretation of a single verse, and so obnoxious to mistake, but of a whole and very large descriptive Prophecy.

But as this species of *double prophecy*, when confined to the events of one single Dispensation, takes off the most plausible objection to *primary* and *secondary* senses in general, it may not be improper to give another instance of it, which shall be taken from a Time when one would least expect to find a *double prophecy* employed, I mean, under the Gospel Dispensation. I have observed, somewhere or other, that the ECONOMY OF GRACE having little or nothing to hide or to shadow out, like the LAW, it had small occasion for *typical* Rites or Celebrations, or for Prophecies with a *double sense*; and that therefore they are not to be expected, nor indeed are they to be found, under the Gospel.

Yet the example I am about to give is an illustrious exception to this general truth. The explanation of this

example will rectify a great deal of embarras and mistake concerning it, and, at the same time, support the general Truth. The Prophecy I mean, is that in which Jesus foretels his FIRST and SECOND COMING IN JUDGMENT, not only under the same ideas, but in one and the same Prediction, as it is recorded, in nearly the same terms, by Matthew, Mark, and Luke; though omitted by St. John, for the reason hereafter to be given.

But to comprehend the full import of this Prophecy, it will be proper to consider the occasion of it. Jesus, after having warmly upbraided the Scribes and Pharisees whom he found in the Temple, with their superstitious abuses of the Law; with their aversion to be reformed;—and their obstinate rejection of their promised Messiah; left them with a dreadful denunciation of the ruin* then hanging over their Civil and Religious Policy. His Disciples, who followed him through the Temple, greatly affected with these threats, and yet possessed with the national prejudice of the Eternity of the Law, pointed as he passed along, at the Temple Buildings, and desired him to observe the stupendous solidity and magnificence of the Work. As much as to say, "Here are no marks of that speedy destruction which you have just now predicted: on the contrary, this mighty Mass seems calculated to endure till the general dissolution of all things." To which, Jesus, understanding their thoughts, replied, that in a very little time *there should not be left one stone upon another*, of all the wonders they saw before them. And from thence takes occasion to prophesy of the speedy destruction of the Jewish Nation. But as the bare prediction of the ruin of that splendid Economy would be likely to scandalize these carnal-minded men, while they saw nothing erected in its stead, by their Messiah and Deliverer, it seemed good to divine Wisdom to represent this destruction under the image of their Messiah's coming to execute judgment on the devoted City, and of

* Matt. xxiii. Mark xii. 34. Luke xvi. 25.

his

his raising a new Economy on its ruin; as was done by the establishment of the Christian Policy*.

But yet, as this was to be unattended with the circumstances of exterior grandeur, He relieves the picture of the *Church-militant*, erected on his coming TO JUDGE JERUSALEM, with all the splendours of the *Church-triumphant*, which were to be displayed at his second coming TO JUDGE THE WORLD. And this, which was so proper for the ornament, and useful for the dignity of the Scene, was necessary for the completion of the Subject, which was a full and entire view of the *Dispensation of Grace*. Thus, as JOEL in one and the same description had combined the previous ravages of the Locusts with the succeeding devastations of the Assyrians, so here, JESUS, hath embroidered into one Piece the intermediate judgment of the Jews, and the final judgment of mankind†.

Let us now see what there was in the *notions* and *language* of the Jewish People, that facilitated the easy introduction of the *secondary sense*; and gave the style, which was proper to that sense, an expressive elegance when applied to the *primary*.

The Jews, besotted with their fancied Eternity of the Law, had entertained a notion that the destruction of Jerusalem was to be immediately followed with the destruction of the World. This made the closeness in the connexion between the *primary* and *secondary* sense of the descriptive prophecy, easy and natural; and as it made the two destructions scarce dividual, so it left no room to distinguish, in any formal manner, between the *first* and *second* coming in Judgment.

The old *prophetic language* was of equal use and advantage to interweave the two senses into one another, which the *notion* here mentioned had drawn together and combined. The change of Magistracy, the fall of King-

* See Julian, or a Discourse concerning his attempt to rebuild the Temple.

† Matt. xxiv. Mark xiii. Luke xxi.

doms,

doms, and the revolutions of States, are described, in the old language of inspiration, by disasters in the Heavens, by the fall of Stars, and by eclipses of the greater Luminaries. This admirably served the purpose of conveying both events under the same set of images; indeed, under one and the same description; namely, the destruction of Jerusalem in the FIGURATIVE sense; and the destruction of the world in the LITERAL.—*The sun shall be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light: and the stars of heaven shall fall, and the powers that are in heaven shall be shaken. And they shall see the Son of man coming in the Clouds with great power and glory**.

So that we see, the representation of a *double sense* in this Prophecy hath all the ease, and strength, and art, which we can conceive possible to enter into a sacred information of this nature. And the close contexture of its parts is so far from obscuring any thing in the two great correlative pictures, portrayed upon it, that it serves to render each more distinct, and better defined. Different indeed in this from most of the Jewish Prophecies of the same kind: And the reason of the difference is obvious. In the Jewish Prophecies, the *secondary sense*, relating to matters in another Dispensation, was of necessity to be left obscure, as unsuitable to the knowledge of the time in which the Prophecy was delivered. Whereas the *first* and *secondary* senses of the Prophecy before us, were equally objective to the contemplation of Christ's Disciples; as the two capital parts of the Dispensation to which they were now become subject.

But it will be said, "That before all this pains had been taken to explain the *beauties* of the double sense, we should have proved the *existence* of it; since, according to our own account of the matter, the magnificent terms employed, which are the principal mark of a SECONDARY sense, are the common prophetic Language to express the subject of the PRIMARY: And because,

* Mark xiii. 24—26. Matt. xxiv. 29, 30.

when

when Jesus, in few words, repeats the substance of this Prophecy to the High-Priest, on the like occasion for which he delivered it at large to his Disciples, he describes the destruction of Jerusalem in those high terms from whence the SECONDARY sense is inferred: for when Jesus was accused of threatening, or of designing to destroy the Temple, and was urged by the High-Priest to make his defence, he says—*Hereafter shall ye see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven**; which words the context necessarily confines to his *coming* in judgement on Jerusalem."

To this I answer, That it was not for fear of being put to the proof, that it was taken for granted that this Prophecy had a *double sense*, a primary and a secondary; because it is only quoting a passage or two in it, to shew that it must necessarily be confessed to have both.

1. That Jesus prophesies of the destruction of Jerusalem, appears from the concluding words recorded by all the three Evangelists—*Verily, I say unto you, that* THIS GENERATION *shall not pass away till* ALL *these things be done or fulfilled*†. Hence, by the way, let me observe, that this fulfilling in the *primary* sense being termed the *fulfilling all*, seems to be the reason why St. John, who wrote his Gospel after the destruction of Jerusalem, hath omitted to record this Prophecy of his Master.

2. That Jesus at the same time speaks of the destruction of the World, at his coming to judge it, appears likewise from his own words recorded by the same Evangelists—*But of that day and hour knoweth no man; no not the Angels of heaven, neither the Son, but the Father*‡. For if the Whole be to be understood only of one single event, then do these two texts expressly contradict one another; the first telling us that the event should come to pass near the close of that very genera-

* Matt. xxvi. 64. Mark xiv. 62. Luke xxii. 69.
† Matt. xxiv. 34. Mark xiii. 30. Luke xxi. 32.
‡ Mark xiii. 32.

tion;

tion; the latter telling us that the time is unknown to all men, nay even to the Angels and to the Son himself:—then does the last quoted text expressly contradict the Prophecy of Daniel *, that very Prophecy to which Jesus all the way refers; for in that prophecy, the *day and hour*, that is, the precise time of the destruction of Jerusalem, is minutely foretold.

Hence it follows that this famous Prophecy hath indeed a DOUBLE SENSE, the one *primary*, and the other *secondary*.

It is true, the infant-Church saw the destruction of the world so plainly foretold in this Prophecy, as to suffer an error to creep into it, of the speedy and instant consummation of all things. This, St. Paul found necessary to correct—*Now I beseech you*, says he, *that ye be not soon shaken in mind, or troubled, as that the day of Christ is at hand*, &c.† And it was on this account, I suppose, that St. Luke, who wrote the latest of the three Evangelists, records this Prophecy in much lower terms than the other two, and entirely omits the words in the text quoted above, which fixes the *secondary* sense of the Prophecy—*of that day and hour*, &c.

If St. Paul exhorted his followers not to be *shaken in mind* on this account; his fellow-labourer St. Peter, when he had in like manner reproved the *scoffers*, who said, *where is the promise of his coming?* went still further, and, to shew his followers that the Church was to be of long continuance here on earth, explains to them the nature of that evidence which *future times* were to have of the truth of the Gospel; an evidence even superior to that which the primitive times enjoyed of MIRACLES ‡; *We have also a more sure word of* PROPHECY; *whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light which shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day-star arise in your hearts* §. This

* Chap. viii. ver. 13, 14.
† 2. Thess. ii. 1. & seq.
‡ 2 Peter, i. 17.
§ Ver. 19.

evidence

evidence of PROPHECY is justly qualified *a more sure word**, when compared to MIRACLES, whose demonstrative evidence is confined to that age in which the power of them was bestowed upon the Church: whereas the *prophecies* here meant, namely, those of St. Paul and St. John†, concerning the GREAT APOSTASY, were always fulfilling even to the last consummation of all things; and so, affording this demonstrative evidence to the men of all generations.

However, if from this prophecy the first Christians drew a wrong conclusion, it was not by the fault of the Divine Prophet, but their own. Jewish Tradition might at first mislead the followers of Jesus to believe that the destruction of the World was very soon to follow the destruction of Jerusalem: But these men soon put off Tradition, with the Law: And Scripture, which was then recommended to them as their only study, with the DOUBLE SENSES with which it abounds, might easily have led them to a *distinction of times* in this Prophecy, a Prophecy formed, as they must needs see, upon the ancient models.

But as Providence is always educing good out of evil (though neither for this, nor any other reason, is evil ever connived at by the disciples of Christ, as appears from the conduct of St. Paul, just mentioned above) this error was fruitful of much service to truth. It nourished and increased a spirit of piety, seriousness, and charity, which wonderfully contributed to the speedy propagation of the Gospel.

Before I conclude, let me just observe (what I have always principally in view), that this explanation of the Prophecy obviates all those impious and absurd insinuations of licentious men, as if Jesus was led either by craft or enthusiasm, either by the gloominess of his own

* Βεβαιότερον, more firm, constant, and durable.

† See Sir Isaac Newton on the Prophecies, c. i. of his Observations upon the Apocalypse of St. John.

ideas, or by his knowledge of the advantage of inspiring such into his Followers, to prophesy of the speedy destruction of the World.

—But by strange ill fortune even some *Believers*, as we have observed, are come at length to deny the very existence of *double senses* and *secondary prophecies*. A late writer hath employed some pages to proclaim his utter disbelief of all such fancies. I shall take the liberty to examine this bold rectifier of prejudices: not for any thing he hath opposed to the Principles here laid down; for I dare say these were never in his thoughts; but only to shew, that all he hath written is wide of the purpose: though, to say the truth, no wider than the notions of those whom he opposes; men who contend for Types and Secondary senses in as extravagant a way as he argues against them; that is, such who take a handle from the doctrine of *double senses* to give a loose to the extravagancies of a vague imagination: consequently his arguments, which are aimed against their very being and *use*, hold only against their *abuse*. And that *abuse*, which others indeed have urged as a proof against the *use*, he sets himself to* confute: a mighty undertaking! and then mistakes his reasoning for a confutation of the *use*.

His Argument against *double senses* in Prophecies, as far as I understand it, may be divided into two parts, 1. Replies to the reasoning of others for *double senses*. 2. His own reasoning against them.—With his Replies I have nothing to do (except where something of argument against the *reality* of double senses is contained) because they are replies to no reasonings of mine, nor to any that I approve. I have only therefore to consider what he hath to say against the thing itself.

1. His first argument against more senses than one, is as follows—"Supposing that the opinion or judgment

* The Principles and Connexion of Natural and Revealed Religion, distinctly considered, p. 221. by Dr. Sykes.

"of

" of the Prophet or Apostle is not to be considered in " matters of *Prophecy* more than the judgment of a " mere *amanuensis* is,—and that the point is not what " the opinion of the *amanuensis* was, but what the *inditer* " intended to express; yet it must be granted, that if " God had any views to some remoter events, at the " same time that the words which were used were " equally applicable to, and designed to express, *nearer* " events: those *remoter* events, as well as the *nearer*, " were in the intention of GOD.: And if both the nearer " and remoter events were equally intended by God in " any Proposition, then the LITERAL SENSE OF THEM " IS NOT THE ONE NOR THE OTHER SINGLY AND " APART, BUT BOTH TOGETHER must be the full mean- " ing of such passages." p. 219.

—*Then the literal sense of them is not the one nor the other singly and apart, but both of them together*, &c. i. e. if both together make up but *one literal sense*, then there is neither a *secondary* nor a *double sense:* and so there is an end of the controversy. A formidable Adversary truly! He threatens to *overthrow the thing*, and gives us an argument against the *propriety of the name*. Let him but allow his adversaries that a *nearer* and a *remoter* event are both the subjects of one and the same Prediction, and, I suppose, it will be indifferent to them whether he call it, with them, a *Prophecy of a double and figurative sense*, or they call it, with him, a *Prophecy of a single literal sense:* And he may be thankful for so much complaisance; for it is plain, they have the better of him even in the *propriety of the name*. It is confessed that GOD, in these predictions, might have views to *nearer* and *remoter* events: now these nearer and remoter events were events under two different Dispensations, the Jewish and the Christian. The Prediction is addressed to the Jews, who had not only a more immediate concern with the first, but, at the time of giving the Prophecy, were not to be let into the secrets of the

other: Hence the prediction of the *nearer* event was properly the *literal* or *primary* sense, as given for the present information of GOD's Servants; and the more *remote* event for their future information, and so was as properly the *secondary* sense, called with great propriety *figurative*, because conveyed under the *terms* which predicted the *nearer* event. But I hope a *first* and a *second*, a *literal* and a *figurative*, may both together at least make up a DOUBLE SENSE. SELDEN understood this matter better, when he said, "The Scripture may "have more senses besides the *literal*, because GOD "understands all things at once; but a man's writing "has but one true sense, which is that which the author "meant when he writ it*."

2. His second argument runs thus,—"WORDS are "the signs of our thoughts, and therefore stand for the "ideas in the mind of him that uses them. If then "words are made use of to signify *two or more things* "*at the same time*, their significancy is really lost, and "it is impossible to understand the real certain intention "of him that uses them. Were GOD therefore to dis-"cover any thing to mankind by any written Revelation, "and were he to make use of such TERMS as stand "for ideas in men's minds, he must speak to them so as "to be understood by them. They must have in their "minds the ideas which God intended to excite in them, "or else it would be in vain to attempt to make dis-"coveries of his Will; and the TERMS made use of must "be such as were wont to raise such certain ideas, or "else there could be no written Revelation. The true "sense therefore of ANY PASSAGE of Scripture can be "but ONE; or if it be said to contain more senses than "one, if such multiplicity be not revealed, the Revelation "becomes useless, because unintelligible." pp. 222, 223.

Men may talk what they please of the obscurity of Writers who have *two senses*, but it has been my fortune

* Table Talk.

to

to meet with it much oftener in those who have *none*. Our Reasoner has here mistaken the very Question, which is, whether a Scripture PROPOSITION (for all Prophecies are reducible to Propositions) be capable of two senses; and, to support the negative, he labours to prove that WORDS OR TERMS can have but one.—*If then* WORDS *are made use of to signify two or more* THINGS *at the same time, their significancy is really lost—such* TERMS *as stand for ideas in men's minds—* TERMS *made use of must be such as are wont to raise such certain ideas*—All this is readily allowed; but how wide of the purpose, may be seen by this instance: Jacob says, *I will go down into* Sheol *unto my son mourning*. Now if SHEOL signify in the ancient *Hebrew*, only the *Grave*, it would be abusing the TERM to make it signify likewise, with the vulgar *Latin, in infernum*, because if WORDS (as he says) *be made to signify two or more things at the same time, their significancy is lost.*—But when this PROPOSITION of the Psalmist comes to be interpreted, *Thou wilt not leave my soul in Hell* [SHEOL] *neither wilt thou suffer thy holy one to see corruption*; though it literally signifies security from the curse of the Law, upon transgressors, *viz.* immature death, yet it is very reasonable to understand it in a spiritual sense, of the resurrection of CHRIST from the dead; in which, the *words* or *terms* translated *Soul* and *Hell*, are left in the meaning they bear in the Hebrew tongue, of *Body* and *Grave*.

But let us suppose our Reasoner to mean that a PROPOSITION is not capable of *two senses*, as perhaps he did in his confusion of ideas, for notwithstanding his express words to the contrary, before he comes to the end of his argument, he talks of *the true sense of* ANY PASSAGE *being but one*; and then his assertion must be, *That if one Proposition have two Senses, its significancy is really lost; and that it is impossible to understand the real certain intention of him that uses them; consequently*

sequently Revelation will become useless, because unintelligible.

Now this I will take the liberty to deny. In the following instances, a *single Proposition* was intended by the writers and speakers to have a *double sense*. The poet Virgil says,

—"Talia, per clypeum Volcani, dona parentis
"Miratur: rerumque ignarus, imagine gaudet,
"ATTOLLENS HUMERO FAMAMQUE ET FATA NEPOTUM*."

The last line has these *two senses:* First, that Æneas bore on his shoulders a shield, on which was engraved a prophetic picture of the fame and fortunes of his posterity: Secondly, that under the protection of that piece of armour he established their fame and fortunes, and was enabled to make a settlement in Latium, which proved the foundation of the Roman empire†.

Here then is a *double sense*, which, I believe, none who have any taste of Virgil will deny. The preceding verse introduces it with great art,

"*Miratur*, rerumque *ignarus* imagine gaudet:"

and prepares us for something mysterious, and hid behind the *letter*.

On Peter's refusing to eat of clean and unclean meats, promiscuously, in the vision presented to him, the Holy Spirit says, *What God hath cleansed, that call not thou common* ‡. The single proposition is, *That which God hath cleansed is not common or impure;* but no one who reads this story can doubt of its having this double sense: 1. *That the distinction between clean and unclean meats was to be abolished.* 2. And *That the Gentiles were to be called into the Church of* CHRIST. Here then the true sense of these PASSAGES is not *one*, but *two:* and yet the intention or meaning is not, on this

* Æneid. lib. viii. in fin.

† See Note [AA] at the end of this Book. ‡ Acts x. 15.

account,

account, the least obscured or lost, or rendered doubtful or unintelligible.

He will say, perhaps, "that the very nature of the subject, in both cases, determines the two senses here explained." And does he think, we will not say the same of *double senses in the Prophecies?* But he seems to take it for granted, that Judaism and Christianity have no kind of relation to one another: Why else would he bring, in discredit of a *double sense*, these two verses of Virgil:

"Hi motus animorum, atque hæc certamina tanta
"Pulveris exigui jactu composta quiescunt."

On which he thus descants—*The words are determinate and clear.—Suppose now a man having occasion to speak of intermitting fevers and the ruffle of a man's spirits, and the easy cure of the disorder by pulverized bark, &c.* p. 225.—To make this pertinent, we must suppose no more relation between the fortunes of the Jewish Church and the Christian, than between a *battle of Bees*, and the *tumult of* the *animal Spirits:* if this were not his meaning, it will be hard to know what was, unless to shew his happy talent at a parody.

But as he seems to delight in classical authorities, I will give him one not quite so absurd; where he himself shall confess that a *double meaning* does in fact run through one of the finest Odes of Antiquity. Horace thus addresses a crazy ship in which his friends had embarked for the Ægean sea:

O navis, referent in mare te novi
Fluctus! ô quid agis? fortiter occupa
Portum: nonne vides ut
Nudum remigio latus*, &c.

In the first and *primary* sense, he describes the dangers of his friends in a weak unmanned vessel, and in a tempestuous sea: in the *secondary*, the dangers of the Republic in entering into a new civil war, after all the losses and disasters of the old. As to the *secondary sense*,

* Hor. Od. lib. i. Od. 14.

which is ever the most questionable and obscure, we have the testimony of early Antiquity delivered by Quintilian: As to the *primary sense*, the following will not suffer us to doubt of it:

Nuper sollicitum quæ mihi tædium,
Nunc desiderium, curaque non levis,
Interfusa nitentes
Vites æquora Cycladas.

But there being, as we have shewn above, two kinds of allegories; (the first, *viz.* the *proper* allegory; which hath but *one real sense*, because the literal meaning, serving only for the *envelope*, and without a *moral import**, is not to be reckoned; the second, the *improper*, which hath *two*, because the literal meaning is of *moral import*; and of this nature are Prophecies with a *double sense*) the Critics on Horace, not apprehending the different natures of these two kinds, have engaged in very warm contests. The one side seeing some parts of the Ode to have a necessary relation with a real ship, contend for its being *purely historical*; at the head of these is Tanaquil Faber, who first started this criticism, after fifteen centuries peaceable possession of the Allegory: the other side, on the authority of Quintilian, who gives the ode as an example of this figure, will have it to be *purely allegorical*. Whereas it is evidently both one and the other; of the nature of the *second kind* of allegories, which have a *double sense*; and this double sense, which does not in the least obscure the meaning, the learned reader may see, adds infinite beauty to the whole turn of the Apostrophe. Had it been *purely historical*, nothing had been more cold or trifling; had it been *purely allegorical*, nothing less natural or gracious, on account of the enormous length into which it is drawn.—Ezekiel has an allegory of that sort which Quintilian supposes this to be, (namely, a *proper allegory with only one real sense*) and he manages it with that brevity and expedition which a *proper*

* See the beginning of this volume.

allegory

allegory demands, when used in the place of a metaphor. Speaking of Tyre under the image of a Ship, he says, *Thy Rowers have brought thee into great waters: the east wind hath broken thee in the midst of the Seas**. But suppose the Ode to be both *historical* and *allegorical*, and that, under his immediate concern for his Friends, he conveyed his more distant apprehensions for the Republic; and then there appears so much ease, and art, and dignity, in every period, as make us justly esteem it the most finished composition of Antiquity.

What is it then which makes the *double sense* so ridiculous and absurd in, *Hi motus animorum, &c.* and so noble and rational in, *O Navis referent, &c.* but this, That, in the latter case, the subject of the *two senses* had a close connexion in the INTERESTS OF THE WRITER; in the former, none at all? Now that which makes two senses *reasonable*, does, at the same time, always make them *intelligible* and obvious. But if this be true, then a double sense in Prophecies must be both reasonable and intelligible: For I think no Believer will deny that there was the closest connexion between the Jewish and Christian systems, in the Dispensations of the Holy Spirit.—This will shew us, with what knowledge of his subject the late Lord Bolingbroke was endowed, when he endeavoured to discredit *Types* and *Figures* by this wise observation, "That Scripture Types "and Figures have NO MORE RELATION TO the things "said to be typified, than to any thing that passes now "in France†."

3. His next argument runs thus—"If GOD is dis-"posed to reveal to mankind any truths—he must con-"vey them in such a manner that they may be under-"stood—if he speaks to men, he must condescend to "their infirmities and capacities—Now if he were to "contrive a Proposition in such a manner—that the "same Proposition should relate to *several* events; the

* Chap. xxvii. ver. 26. † Works, vol. iii. p. 306.

"consequence

" consequence would be, that as often as events happened " which agreed to any Proposition, so often would the " Revelation be accomplished. But this would only " serve to increase the confusion of men's minds, and " never to clear up any Prophecy: No man could say " what was intended by the Spirit of GOD: And if " MANY events were intended, it would be the same " thing as if NO event was intended at all." p. 226.

I all along suspected he was talking against what he did not understand. He proposed to prove the absurdity of a *double* or *secondary sense* (p. 221) of Prophecies; and now he tells us of MANY senses; and endeavours to shew how this would make Prophecy useless. But sure he should have known, what the very phrase itself intimates, that no prophetic proposition is pretended to have more than TWO senses: And farther, that the subject of each is supposed to relate to *two* connected and successive Dispensations: which is so far from creating *any confusion in men's minds*, or *making a Prophecy useless*, that it cannot but strengthen and confirm our belief of, and give *double* evidence to, the divinity of the Prediction. On the contrary, he appears to think that what orthodox Divines mean by a *second sense*, is the same with what the Scotch Prophets mean by a *second sight*; the seeing one thing after another as long as the imagination will hold out.

4. His last argument is—" Nor is it any ground for " such a supposition, that the Prophets being FULL OF " THE IDEAS of the *Messiah*, and his glorious kingdom, " MADE USE OF IMAGES taken from thence, to express " the points upon which they had occasion to speak. " From *whencesoever* they took their ideas, yet when they " spoke of *present facts*, it was *present facts* only that " were to be understood. Common language, and the " figures of it, and the manner of expression; the *metaphors*, the *hyperboles*, and all the usual forms of speech, " are to be considered: And if the occasions of the

" expression

" expression are taken from a *future state*, yet still the " Proposition is to be interpreted of that *one* thing to " which it is particularly applied." p. 227.

Orthodox Divines have supported the reasonableness and probability of *double senses* by this material Observation, that the inspired Writers were *full of the ideas of the Christian Dispensation.* That is, there being a close relation between the Christian and the Jewish, of which the Christian was the completion, whenever the Prophets spoke of any of the remarkable fortunes of the one, they interwove with it those of the other. A truth, which no man could be so hardy to deny, who believes, 1. That there is that relation between the two Religions: and, 2. That these inspired men were let into the nature and future fortunes of both. See now in what manner our Author represents this observation. *It is no ground,* says he, *for a double sense, that the Prophets were full of the ideas of a Messiah and his glorious kingdom, and made use of images taken from thence*; [that is, that they ennobled their style by their habitual contemplation of magnificent ideas.]. *For* (continues he) *whencesoever they took their ideas, when they spoke of present facts, present facts alone were to be understood. Common language and the figures of it*, &c.—Without doubt, from such a *fulness of ideas*, as only raised and ennobled their style, it could be no more concluded that they meant future facts, when they speak of present, than that Virgil, because he was full of the magnificent ideas of the Roman grandeur, where he says, *Priami Imperium— Divûm Domus, Ilium, & Ingens gloria Teucrorum*, meant *Rome* as well as *Troy.* But what is all this to the purpose? Orthodox Divines talk of a *fulness of ideas* arising from the Holy Spirit's revealing the *mutual dependency* and *future fortunes* of the two Dispensations; and revealing them for the information, solace, and support of the Christian Church: And Dr. Sykes talks of a *fulness of ideas* got nobody knows how, and used nobody

knows

knows why,—*to raise* (I think he says) *their style and ennoble their images.* Let him give some good account of this representation, and then we may be able to determine, if it be worth the trouble, whether he here put the change upon himself or his readers. To all this Dr. Sykes replies, "It was no answer, to shew that "there are *allegories and allegorical interpretations*, "for these were never by me denied." Exam. p. 363. Why does he tell us of his never denying *allegories*, when he is called upon for denying *secondary senses?* Does he take these things to be *different?* If he does, his answer is nothing to the purpose, for he is only charged, in express words, with denying *secondary senses.* Does he take them to be the *same?* He must then allow *secondary senses*; and so give up the question; that is, retract the passages here quoted from him. He is reduced to this dilemma, either to acknowledge that he first writ, or that he now answers, to no purpose*.

From hence, to the end of the chapter, he goes on to examine particular texts urged against his opinion; with which I have at present nothing to do: first, because the proper subject of this section is the *general nature* only of types and double senses: and secondly, because what room I have to spare, on this head, is for a much welcomer Guest, whom I am now returning to, the original author of these profound reasonings, Mr. Collins himself.

II.

We have shewn that *types* and *secondary senses* are rational, logical, and scholastic modes of information: that they were expedient and highly useful under the Jewish Economy: and that they are indeed to be found in the Institutes of the Law and the Prophets. But now it will be objected, "that, as far as relates to the Jewish Economy, a *double sense* may be allowed; because the future affairs of that Dispensation may be well supposed

* See note [BB] at the end of this Book.

to

to occupy the thoughts of the Prophet; but it is unreasonable to make one of the senses relate to a different and remote Dispensation, never surely in his thoughts. *For the books of the Old Testament* (Mr. Collins tells us) *are the most plain of all ancient writings, and wherein there appears not the least trace of a Typical or Allegorical intention in the Authors, or in any other Jews of their time* *."

I reply, that was it even as our adversaries suggest, that *all* the Prophecies, which, we say, relate to JESUS, relate to him only in a *secondary* sense; and that there were no other intimations of the New Dispensation but what such Prophecies convey; it would not follow that *such* sense was false or groundless. And this I have clearly shewn in the account of their nature, original, and use. Thus much I confess, that without miracles, in confirmation of such sense, some † of them would with difficulty be proved to have it; because we have shewn, that a commodious and designed obscurity attends both their nature and their use. But then, This let me add, and these Pretenders to superior reason would do well to consider it, that the authority of divine Wisdom as rationally forces the assent to a *determined meaning* of an obscure and doubtful Proposition, as any other kind of logical evidence whatsoever.

But this which is here put, is by no means the case. For we say, 1. That some of the Prophecies relate to JESUS in a *primary* sense. 2. That besides these, there are in the prophetic Writings the most clear and certain intimations of the *Gospel Economy*, which are alone sufficient to ascertain the reality of the *secondary*.

I. That SOME Prophecies relate to the MESSIAH in a *primary sense*, hath been invincibly proved by many learned men before me: I shall mention therefore but ONE; and that, only because Mr. Collins hath made some remarks upon it, which will afford occasion for a

* Grounds, p. 82. † See note [CC] at the end of this Book.

farther

farther illustration of the subject. JESUS declares, of John the Baptist—*This is the* ELIAS *that was for to come.* "Wherein (says the Author of *the Grounds*, &c.) "he is supposed to refer to these words of Malachi, "*Behold I will send you Elijah the Prophet before the* "*coming of the great and terrible day of the Lord;* "which, according to their LITERAL sense, are a Pro- "phesy that *Elijah* or *Elias* was to come in person, and "therefore not LITERALLY but MYSTICALLY fulfilled "in *John the Baptist.*" pp. 47, 48. And again, *in his Scheme of literal Prophecy considered*, speaking of this passage of *Malachi*, he says, "But to cut off all pretence "for a *literal* Prophecy, I observe, first, That the literal "interpretation of this place is, that *Elias*, the real "*Elias*, was to come. And is it not a MOST PLEASANT "literal interpretation to make *Elias* not signify *Elias*, "but somebody who resembled him in qualities?— "Secondly I observe, that the *Septuagint* Translators "render it, *Elias the Tishbite*,—and that the *Jews*, "since CHRIST's time, have generally understood, from "the passage before us, that *Elias is to come in person.*— "But *John Baptist* himself, who must be supposed to "know who he was himself, when the question was "asked him, *whether he was Elias*, denied himself to be "*Elias*; and when asked who he was, said, he was the "voice of one crying in the Wilderness, *&c.* which is a "passage taken from *Isaiah.*" p. 127.

1. The first thing observable in these curious remarks is, that this great Advocate of Infidelity did not so much as understand the terms of the question. The words, says he, *according to their literal sense, are a Prophesy that Elijah was to come in person, and therefore not literally but mystically fulfilled in* John *the* Baptist. He did not so much as know the meaning of a *primary* and *secondary sense*, about which he makes all this stir. A *secondary* sense indeed implies a *figurative* interpretation; a *primary* implies a *literal:* But yet this *primary*

SENSE

SENSE does not exclude *figurative* TERMS. The *primary* or literal sense of the Prophecy in question is, that, before the great and terrible day of the Lord, a messenger should be sent, resembling in character the Prophet *Elijah*; this messenger, by a *figure*, is called the Prophet *Elijah*. A figure too of the most easy and natural import; and of especial use amongst the Hebrews, who were accustomed to denote any character or action by that of the kind which was become most known or celebrated. Thus the Prophet Isaiah: "And the Lord "shall utterly destroy the *tongue* of the *Egyptian* sea, "and with his mighty wind shall he shake his hand over "the river, and shall smite it in the *seven streams* *." Here, a second passage through the *Red Sea* is promised in *literal terms*: But who therefore will say that this is the *literal meaning*? The literal meaning, though the prophecy be in *figurative terms*, is simply redemption from bondage. For EGYPT, in the Hebrew phrase, signified *a place of bondage*. So again Jeremiah says; "A voice was heard in Ramah, lamentation and bitter "weeping: RACHEL weeping for her children refused "to be comforted because they were not †." The primary sense of these words, according to Grotius, is a prediction of the weeping of the Jewish matrons for their children carried captive to Babylon by Nabuzaradan. Will he say therefore that this Prophecy was not *literally* fulfilled, because *Rachel* was dead many ages before, and did not, that we read of, return to life on this occasion? Does not he see that, by the most common and easy figure, the Matrons of the tribe of Benjamin were called by the name of this their great Parent? As the Israelites, in Scripture, are called *Jacob*, and the posterity of the son of Jesse by the name of *David*: So again, Isaiah says, "Hear the word of the Lord, ye rulers of "SODOM; give ear unto the Law of our GOD, ye people "of GOMORRAH ‡." Will he say, the people of *Sodom*

* Ch. xi. ver. 15. † Ch. xxxi. ver. 15. ‡ Ch. i. ver. 10.

and

and *Gomorrah* are here addressed to in the *primary* sense, and the people of the Jews only in the *secondary?* But the preceding words, which shew the people of *Sodom* and *Gomorrah* could not now be addressed to, because there were none left, shew likewise that it is the Jewish Nation which is called by these names. *Except the Lord of Hosts had left us a very* small remnant, *we should have been as* Sodom, *and we should have been like unto* Gomorrah*. Would not he be thought an admirable interpreter of *Virgil*, who should criticise the Roman Poet in the same manner?—*Virgil seems the most plain of all ancient writings: And he says,*

" Jam redit & Virgo, redeunt Saturnia regna."

Which, according to its literal meaning, is, that the Virgin *returns, and old* Saturn *reigns again, in person; and therefore not* LITERALLY, *but* MYSTICALLY *fulfilled in the justice and felicity of* Augustus's *reign. And it is a* MOST PLEASANT *literal interpretation, to make the* Virgin *and* Saturn *not signify the* Virgin *and* Saturn, *but somebody who resembled them in qualities.* Such reasoning on a Classic, would be called *nonsense* in every language. But Freethinking sanctifies all sorts of impertinence. Let me observe further, that this was a kind of compound blunder: LITERAL, in common speech, being opposed both to *figurative* and to *spiritual*; and MYSTICAL signifying both *figurative* and *spiritual*; he fairly confounded the distinct and different meanings both of LITERAL and of MYSTICAL.

He goes on—*I observe, that the Septuagint Translators render it* Elias *the* Tishbite—*and that the* Jews *since* CHRIST's *time have generally understood from this passage, that* Elias *is to come in person. And* John Baptist *himself, who must be supposed to know who he was himself, when the question was asked him, denied himself to be* Elias.—Why does he say, *Since* CHRIST's *time*, and not *before*, when it appears to be before as well

* Chap. i. ver. 9.

as

as since, from his own account of the translation of the Septuagint? For a good reason. We should then have seen why *John the Baptist*, when asked, denied himself to be *Elias*; which it was not, Mr. Collins's design we should see; if indeed we do not ascribe too much to his knowledge in this matter. The case stood thus: At the time of the Septuagint translation, and from thence to the time of CHRIST, the doctrine of a *Transmigration*, and of a *Resurrection of the body, to repossess the Land of Judea*, were national opinions; which occasioned the Jews by degrees to understand all these sorts of *figurative* expressions *literally*. Hence, amongst their many visions, this was one, that Elias should come again in person. Which shews what it was the Jews asked John the Baptist; and what it was he answered, when *he denied himself to be Elias*: Not that he was not the Messenger prophesied of by Malachi (for his pretending to be that Messenger evidently occasioned the question) but that he was not, nor did the prophecy imply that the Messenger should be, *Elias in person*.

But to set his reasoning in the fullest light, Let us consider a similar prophecy of Amos: *Behold the days come, saith the Lord God, that I will send a* FAMINE *in the land, not a famine of bread, nor a thirst of water, but of hearing the words of the Lord**. I would ask, is this a Prophecy of *a famine of the word* in a *literal*, or in a *mystical* sense? Without doubt the Deist will own, (if ever he expects we should appeal again to his ingenuity) in a *literal*. But now strike out the explanation [*not a famine of bread, nor a thirst of water*] and what is it then? Is it not still a *famine of the word*, in a *literal* sense? *Mystical*, if you will, in the meaning of *metaphorically obscure*, but not in the meaning of *spiritual*. But *mystical* in this latter signification only, is opposed to *literal*, in the question about *secondary senses*. It appears then, that *a want of preaching the*

* Chap. viii. ver. 11.

word is still the *literal* meaning of the Prophecy, whether the explanation be in or out, though the *figurative* term [*famine*] be used to express that meaning. And the reason why the Prophet explains the term, was not, because it was a harsh or unnatural *figure*, to denote *want of preaching*, any more than the term *Elijah* to denote a similar character, which Malachi does not explain; but because the Prophecy of Amos might have been for ever mistaken, and the *figurative* term understood *literally*; the People being at that time, often punished for their sins by a *famine of bread*.

But this abusive cavil at *figurative terms* will remind us of his observations on the following Prophecy of Isaiah—"Even them will I bring to my holy mountain, "and make them joyful in my house of prayer: their "burnt offerings and their sacrifices shall be accepted "upon mine altar; for mine house shall be called an "house of Prayer FOR ALL PEOPLE*." This, he says, must needs relate to Jewish, not to Christian times. Why? Because *sacrifices* are mentioned. But how could this truth be told the Jewish People, *that all nations should be gathered to the true* GOD, otherwise than by using terms taken from Rites familiar to them; unless the nature of the Christian Dispensation had been previously explained? A matter evidently unfit for their information, when they were yet to live so long under the Jewish. For though the Prophets speak of the little value of, and small regard due to, the *ceremonial* Law; they always mean (and always make their meaning understood) when the *ceremonial Law* is superstitiously observed, and observed to a neglect of the *moral*; which last they describe in the purity and perfection of the Gospel. So admirable was this conduct! that while it hid the future Dispensation, it prepared men for it.

Thus then stands the argument of this mighty Reasoner. There are *no* Prophecies, he says, which relate to JESUS

* Chap. lvi. ver. 7.

but

but in a *secondary sense*. Now a secondary sense is *unscholastic* and *enthusiastical*. To this we answer, that the Prophecy of Malachi about Elijah, and of Isaiah about bringing all people to his holy mountain, relate to JESUS in a *primary sense*. He replies, No, but in a *mystical, only*. Here he begins to quibble, the sure sign of an expiring argument: *Mystical* signifies as well *secondary* as *figurative*. In the sense of *secondary*, the interpretation of these Prophecies to JESUS is *not mystical*; in the sense of *figurative* it is. But is the use of a *figurative term* enthusiastical or unscholastic, when the end is only to convey information concerning a less known thing in the *terms* of one more known? Now whether we are to charge this to ill faith or a worse understanding, his Followers shall determine for me.

2. But we will suppose all that an ingenuous Adversary can ask—"That most of the Prophecies in question relate to JESUS in a *secondary sense only*; the rest in a *primary*, but expressed in *figurative* terms; which, till their completion, threw a shade over their meaning, and kept them in a certain degree of obscurity." Now, to shew how all this came about, will add still farther light to this very perplexed question.

We have seen, from the nature and long duration of the Jewish economy, that the Prophecies which relate to JESUS, must needs be darkly and enigmatically delivered: We have seen how the *allegoric* Mode of speech, then much in use, furnished the means, by what we call a *double sense* in Prophecies, of doing this with all the requisite obscurity. But as some of these Prophecies by their proper light alone, without the confirmation of miracles, could hardly have their sublimer sense so well ascertained; to render all opposers of the Gospel without excuse, it pleased the Holy Spirit, under the last race of the Prophets, to give credentials to the mission of JESUS by predictions of him in a *primary* and *literal* sense. Yet the Jewish Economy being to continue long, there

still remained the same necessity of a covert and mysterious conveyance. That figurative expression therefore, which was before employed in the *proposition*, was now used in the *terms*. Hence, the Prophecies of a *single sense* come to be in highly figurative words: as before, the earlier prophecies of a *double sense* (which had a *primary* meaning in the affairs of the Jewish State, and, for the present information of that People) were delivered in a much simpler phrase.

The Jewish Doctors, whose obstinate adherence, not to the *letter of the Law*, as this Writer ignorantly or fraudulently suggests, but to the mystical interpretations of the *Cabala*, prevents their seeing the true cause of this difference in the LANGUAGE, between the earlier and later Prophets; the Jewish Doctors, I say, are extremely perplexed to give a tolerable account of this matter. What they best agree in is, that the *figurative enigmatic style* of the later Prophets (which however they make infinitely more obscure by cabalistic meanings, than it really is, in order to evade the relation which the Predictions have to JESUS) is owing to the *declining state* of Prophecy. *Every Prophet*, says the famous Rabbi, Joseph Albo, *that is of a strong, sagacious, and piercing understanding, will apprehend the thing nakedly, without any similitude; whence it comes to pass that all his sayings are distinct and clear, and free from all obscurity, having a literal truth in them: But a Prophet of an inferior rank or degree, his words are obscure, enwrapped in riddles and parables; and therefore have not a literal but allegorical truth contained in them**. And indeed our fictitious Rabbi seems to have had as little knowledge of this matter as the other; for in answer to what Mr. Whiston, who, extravagant as he was in rejecting all *double senses*, yet knew the difference between a *secondary* and *enigmatic* prophecy, which, we shall see, Mr. Collins did not, in answer, I say, to Mr. Whiston, who observed,

* Smith's Select Discourses, p. 180.

that

that the Prophecies [meaning the *primary*] *which relate to Christianity are covered, mystical and enigmatical,* replies, *This is exactly equal mysticism with, and just as remote from the real literal sense, as the mysticism of the Allegorists* [*i. e* the Contenders for a double sense] *and is altogether as* OBSCURE *to the understanding**. His argument against *secondary senses* is, that they are *unscholastic* and *enthusiastical.* Mr. Whiston, to humour him, presents him with *direct* and *primary* Prophecies, but tells him at the same time, they are expressed in *covered, mystical, and enigmatic terms.* This will not satisfy him; *it is no better than the mysticism of the Allegorists.* How so? We may think perhaps, that he would pretend to prove, because his argument requires he should prove, that *enigmatical expressions* are as *unscholastic* and *enthusiastical* as *secondary senses.* No such matter. All he says is, that they are *as* OBSCURE *to the understanding.* But *obscurity* is not his quarrel with *secondary senses.* He objects to them as *unscholastic and enthusiastical.* But here lay the difficulty; no man, who pretended to any language, could affirm this, of *figurative enigmatical expressions*; he was forced therefore to have recourse to his usual refuge, OBSCURITY.

It is true, he says, these *mystical enigmatic Prophecies (as Mr. Whiston calls them) are equally remote from the real literal sense, as the mysticism of the Allegorists.* But this is only a repetition of the blunder exposed above, where he could not distinguish between the literal sense of a *Term*, and the literal sense of a *Proposition.* And how gross that ignorance is we may see by the following instance. Isaiah says, *The Wolf also shall dwell with the Lamb, and the Leopard shall lie down with the Kid; and the Calf, and the young Lion, and the Fatling together, and a little Child shall lead them*†. Now I will take it for granted that his Followers understand this, as Grotius does, of the profound peace which was to follow after

* The Grounds, &c. p. 242. † Chap. xi. ver 6.

the times of Senacherib, under Hezekiah: but though the *terms* be *mystical*, yet sure they call this the *literal sense* of the prophecy: For Grotius makes the *mystical sense* to refer to the Gospel. Mr. Whiston, I suppose, denies that this has any thing to do with the times of Hezekiah, but that it refers to those of CHRIST only. Is not his interpretation therefore *literal* as well as that of Grotius? unless it immediately becomes *oddly typical, unscholastic, and enthusiastical*, as soon as ever JESUS comes into the question.

II. But now, besides the *literal primary* prophecies concerning the PERSON of JESUS, we say, in the second place, that there are other, which give a *primary* and *direct* intimation of the CHANGE OF THE DISPENSATION. Isaiah foretels great mercies to the Jewish People, in a future Age; which, though represented by such metaphors as bore analogy to the blessings peculiar to the Jewish economy, yet, to shew that they were indeed different from what the *figurative terms* alluded to, the Prophet at the same time adds, *My thoughts are not as your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the Lord**. This surely implies a *different* DISPENSATION. That the change was from *carnal* to *spiritual*, is elegantly intimated in the subjoining words,—*For as the* HEAVENS *are higher than the* EARTH, *so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts*†. But this higher and more excellent Dispensation is more plainly revealed in the following figure: *Instead of the thorn shall come up the fir-tree, and instead of the brier shall come up the myrtle-tree*‡; *i. e.* the *new* Religion shall as far excel the *old*, as the fir-tree does the thorn, or the myrtle the brier. In a following Prophecy he shews the EXTENT of this new Religion, as here he had shewn its NATURE; that it was to spread beyond Judea, and to take in the whole race of mankind,—*The* GENTILES *shall come to thy light, and*

* Chap. lv. ver. 8. † Ver. 9. ‡ Ver. 13.

kings

*kings to the brightness of thy rising**, &c. Which idea the Prophet Zephaniah expresses in so strong a manner, as to leave no room for evasion: *The Lord will be terrible unto them, for he will* FAMISH *all the* GODS OF THE EARTH; *and men shall worship him every one* FROM HIS PLACE, *even all the isles of the* GENTILES†. The expression is noble, and alludes to the popular superstitions of Paganism, which conceived that their Gods were nourished by the steam of sacrifices. But, when were the Pagan Gods thus *famished*, but in the first ages of Christianity?—*Every one from his place*; that is, they were not to go up to JERUSALEM to worship.—*Even all the isles of the Gentiles:* but when did these worship the God of Israel *every one from his place*, before the preaching of the Apostles? Then indeed their speedy and general conversion distinguished them from the rest of the nations. This he expresses yet more plainly in another place. "In that day shall there be an "*altar* to the Lord in the midst of the Land of "*Egypt*‡;" *i. e.* the Temple-service shall be abolished; and the God of Israel worshipped with the most solemn rites, even in the most abhorred and unsanctified places, such as the Jews esteemed Egypt. Which Malachi thus diversifies in the expression, *And in every place incense shall be offered unto my name, and a* PURE OFFERING§; *i. e.* it shall not be the less acceptable for not being at the *Temple*.

But Isaiah, as he proceeds, is still more explicit, and declares, in direct terms, that the Dispensation should be changed, *Behold I create* NEW HEAVENS *and a* NEW EARTH; *and the former shall not be remembered nor come into mind*‖. This, in the prophetic style, means a NEW RELIGION and a NEW LAW; the metaphors, as we have shewn elsewhere, being taken from hieroglyphical expression. He speaks in another place, of the consequence of this *change*; namely, the transferring the benefits of

* Ch. lx. ver. 3. † Ch. ii. ver. 11. ‡ Ch. xix. ver. 19.
§ See note [D D] at the end of this Book. ‖ Isai. lxv. 17.

Religion from the Jewish to the Christian Dispensation. Is it not yet a very little while, "and Lebanon [*the "isles of the Gentiles*] shall be turned into a fruitful "field, and the fruitful field [*the land of Judea*] shall "be esteemed as a forest*?" To make it yet more clear, I observe farther, that the Prophet goes on to declare the *change* of the SANCTION; and this was a necessary consequence of the change of the Dispensation.—*There shall be no more thence an infant of days, nor an old man that hath not filled his days: For the child shall die an hundred years old, but the sinner being an hundred years old shall be accursed*†; *i. e.* the SANCTION OF TEMPORAL REWARDS AND PUNISHMENTS shall be no longer administered in an extraordinary manner; for we must remember, that long life for obedience, and sudden and untimely death for transgressions, bore an eminent part in the Sanction of the Jewish Law. Now these are expressly said to be abrogated in the Dispensation promised, it being declared that the Virtuous, though dying immaturely, should be as if they had lived an hundred years; and sinners, though living to an hundred years, as if they had died immaturely.

The very same prophecy in Jeremiah, delivered in less figurative terms, supports this interpretation beyond all possibility of cavil: "Behold the days come, saith the "Lord, that I will make a NEW COVENANT with the "house of *Israel*, and with the house of *Judah*; *not "according to the Covenant that I made with their fa-"thers*, in the day that I took them by the hand, to bring "them out of the land of *Egypt*.—But *this shall be the "Covenant* that I will make with the house of *Israel*, "After those days, saith the Lord, *I will put my Law "in their* INWARD PARTS, *and write it in their "HEARTS*‡."

What Isaiah figuratively names a *new Heaven and a new Earth*, Jeremiah simply and literally calls a *new*

* Ch. xxix. ver. 17. † Ch. lxv. ver. 20. ‡ Ch. xxxi. ver. 31.

Covenant.

Covenant. And what kind of Covenant? Not such an one as was made with their Fathers. This was declarative enough of its nature; yet, to prevent mistakes, he gives as well a *positive* as a *negative* description of it: *This shall be the Covenant, I will put my Law in their inward parts, &c. i. e.* this Law shall be *spiritual*, as the other given to their Fathers was *carnal:* For the Ceremonial Law did not scrutinize the heart, but rested in external obedience and observances.

Lastly, to crown the whole, we may observe, that Jeremiah too, like Isaiah, fixes the true nature of the Dispensation by declaring the CHANGE of the SANCTION: "In those days they shall say no more, the fathers have "eaten a sour grape, and the childrens' teeth are set on "edge. But every one shall die for his own iniquity; "every man that eateth the sour grape, his teeth shall be "set on edge*." For it was part of the Sanction of the Jewish Law, that children should bear the iniquity of their fathers, &c. a mode of punishing which hath been already explained and justified. Yet all these Prophecies of the GOSPEL being delivered in terms appropriate to the LAW, the Jews of that time would naturally, as they in fact did, understand them as speaking of the extension and completion of the OLD Dispensation, rather than the perfection of it by the introduction of a NEW. And thus their reverence for the present System, under which they were yet to continue, was preserved. The necessity of this proceeding, for the present time;—the effects it would afterwards produce through the perversity of the superstitious followers of the Law;—and the divine goodness as well as wisdom manifested in this proceeding, are all finely touched in the following passage of Isaiah†—"Whom shall he teach knowledge? and whom shall he "make to understand doctrine? Them that are weaned "from the milk, and drawn from the breasts‡. For

* Ver. 29. † Chap. xxviii. 9, & seq.

‡ i. e. Those who were most free from the prejudices of the *Eternity* of the Law,

"precept

" precept must be [or *hath been*] upon precept, precept " upon precept, line upon line, line upon line *, here a " little and there a little. For with stammering lips and " another tongue will he speak to this People †. To " whom he said, This is the rest, and this is the refresh- " ing ‡, yet they would not hear. But the word of the " Lord was unto them, precept upon precept, precept " upon precept, line upon line, line upon line, here a " little and there a little; that they might go and fall " backward, and be broken and snared and taken §."

Notwithstanding all this, if you will believe our Adversary. *The books of the Old Testament seem the most* PLAIN *of all ancient writings, and wherein there appears* NOT THE LEAST TRACE OF TYPICAL OR ALLEGORICAL INTENTION *in the Authors, or in any other* Jews *of their times* ‖. He that answers a Freethinker will find employment enough.—*Not the least trace of a typical or allegorical intention!* He might as well have said there is *not the least trace* of poetry in Virgil, or of eloquence in Cicero. But there is none, he says, *either in the Authors, or in any other* Jews *of their times.* Of both which Assertions, this single Text of Ezekiel will be an abundant confutation—*Ah, Lord,* THEY SAY OF ME, DOTH HE NOT SPEAK PARABLES ¶? The Prophet complains that his ineffectual Mission proceeded from his speaking, and from the People's conceiving him to speak, of things mysteriously, and in a mode of delivery not understood by them. The Author

* This reduplication of the phrase was to add force and energy to the sense.

† i.e. Gospel truths delivered in the language of the Law.

‡ i.e. The glad tidings of the Gospel.

§ i.e. This gradual yet repeated instruction, which was given with so much mercy and indulgence, to lead them by slow and gentle steps from the Law to the Gospel, being abused so as to defeat the end, God in punishment made it the occasion of blinding their eyes and hardening their hearts.

‖ Grounds, &c. p. 82. ¶ Chap. xx. ver. 49.

of

of the book of Ecclesiasticus, who is reasonably supposed to have been contemporary with Antiochus Epiphanes, represents holy Scripture as fully fraught with typical and allegoric wisdom: "He that giveth his mind to the "Law of the Most High, and is occupied in the medita- "tion thereof, will seek out the wisdom of the Ancients, "AND BE OCCUPIED IN PROPHECIES. He will keep "the sayings of the renowned men; and where SUBTILE "PARABLES are, he will be there also. He will seek "out the SECRETS OF GRAVE SENTENCES, and be "conversant in DARK PARABLES*." Hence it appears that the Jewish Prophecies were not so *plain* as our Adversary represents them; and that their obscurity arose from their having *Typical* or *Allegorical intentions*: which figures too related not to the *present*, but to a *future* Dispensation, as is farther seen from what Ezekiel says in another place—*Son of man, behold they of the house of Israel say*, THE VISION THAT HE SEETH IS FOR MANY DAYS TO COME, AND HE PROPHESIETH OF THE TIMES THAT ARE FAR OFF†. So that these People to whom the Prophecies were so *plain*, and who understood them to respect their own times only, *without any Typical or Allegoric meaning*, complain of *obscurities* in them, and consider them as referring to very *remote times*. But I am ashamed of being longer serious with so idle a Caviller. The *English Bible* lies open to every FREE-THINKER of Great Britain; Where they may read it that will, and understand it that can.

As for such Writers, as the Author of the *Grounds and Reasons*, To say the truth, one would never wish to see them otherwise employed: But when so great and so good a man as GROTIUS hath unwarily contributed to support the dotages of Infidelity, this is such a misadventure as one cannot but lament.

* —— ἐν προφητείαις ἀσχοληθήσεται—ἐν προφαῖς παραβολῶν συνιστελέυσεται—ἐν αἰνίγμασι παραβολῶν ἀναστραφήσεται. Ch. xxxix. ver. 1, 2, 3.

† Chap. xii. ver. 27.

This

This excellent Person (for it is not to be disguised) hath made it his constant endeavour throughout his whole Comment on the Prophets, to find a *double* sense even in those *direct* Prophecies which relate to JESUS; and to turn the *primary* sense upon the affairs of the Jewish Dispensation; only permitting them to relate to JESUS in a *secondary*: and by that affected strain of interpretation, hath done almost as much harm to Revelation as his other writings have done it service: not from any strength there is in his Criticisms (for this, and his Comment on the Apocalypse, are the opprobrium of his great learning), but only from the name they carry with them.

The Principle which *Grotius* went upon, in commenting the Bible, was, that it should be interpreted on the same rules of Criticism that men use in the study of all other ancient Writings. Nothing could be more reasonable than his Principle: but unluckily he deceived himself in the *application* of it. These rules teach us that the GENIUS, PURPOSE, and AUTHORITY of the Writer should be carefully studied. Under the head of his *authority*, it is to be considered, whether he be a mere *human* or an *inspired* Writer. Thus far Grotius went right: he examined that authority; and pronounced the Writers to be *inspired*, and the Prophecies *divine*: But when he came to apply these premisses, he utterly forgot his conclusion; and interpreted the Prophecies by rules very different from what the confession of their divine original required: for seeing them pronounced by Jewish Prophets, occupied in Jewish Affairs, he concluded their sole Object was Jewish; and consequently that the proper sense of the Prophecies referred to these only. But this was falling back from one of the grounds he went upon, That the Writers were *inspired*: for his interpretation was only reasonable on the supposition that these Writers prophesied in the very manner which the Pagans understood their Prophets sometimes to have

done, by a *natural sagacity:* For, on the allowance of a real inspiration, it was GOD, and not the Writer, who was the proper Author of the Prophecy; and to understand *his purpose*, which the rules of interpretation require us to seek, we must examine the nature, reason, and end of that Religion which he gave to the Jews: For on *these*, common sense assures us, the meaning of the Prophecies must be intirely regulated. Now if, on enquiry, it should be found, that this which Grotius admitted for a divine Dispensation, was only preparatory of another more perfect, it would then appear not to be improbable that some of these Prophecies might relate, in their *literal, primary*, and *immediate* sense, to that more perfect Dispensation. And whether they did so or not was to be determined by the joint evidence of the context, and of the nature of GOD's whole Dispensation to mankind, so far forth as it is discoverable to us. But Grotius, instead of making the matter thus reasonably problematical, and to be determined by evidence, determined first, and laid it down as a kind of Principle, that the Prophecies related directly and properly to Jewish affairs: and into this system he wiredrew all his explanations. This, as we say, was falsely applying a true rule of interpretation. He went on this reasonable ground, that the Prophecies should be interpreted like all other ancient Writings: and, on examining their *authority*, he found them to be truly *divine*. When he had gone thus far, he then preposterously went back again, and commented as if they were confessed to be merely *human:* The consequence was, that several of his criticisms, to speak of them only as the performance of a man of learning, are so forced, unnatural, and absurd, so opposed to the rational canon of interpretation, that I will venture to affirm they are, in all respects, the worst that ever came from the hand of an acute and able Critic.

III. Having

III.

Having now proved that the Principles which Mr. Collins went upon are in themselves false and extravagant, one has little reason to regard how he employed them. But as this extraordinary Writer was as great a Freethinker in Logic as in Divinity, it may not be improper to shew the fashionable World what sort of man they have chosen for their Guide, to lead them from their Religion, when they would no longer bear with any to direct them in it.

His argument against what he calls *typical, allegorical,* but properly, *secondary* senses, stands thus:—"Christianity pretends to derive itself from Judaism. JESUS appeals to the religious books of the Jews as prophesying of his Mission. None of these Prophecies can be undertood of him but in a *typical allegoric* sense. Now that sense is absurd, and contrary to all scholastic rules of interpretation. Christianity, therefore, not being really predicted of in the Jewish Writings, is consequently false."—The contestable Proposition, on which the whole argument rests, is, *That a typical or allegoric sense is absurd, and contrary to all scholastic rules of interpretation.*

Would the Reader now believe that Mr. Collins has himself, in this very book, given a thorough confutation of his own capital Proposition? Yet so it is; and, contrary too to his usual way of reasoning, he has done it in a very clear and convincing manner; by shewing, that the *typical* and *allegorical* way of writing was universally practised by Antiquity.—"Allegory (says he) "was much in use amongst the *Pagans*, being culti- "vated by many of the Philosophers themselves as well "as Theologers. By SOME, AS THE METHOD OF DELI- "VERING DOCTRINES; but by most, as the method of "explaining away what, according to the letter, appeared "absurd in the ancient fables or histories of their Gods.

"Religion

"Religion itself was deemed a mysterious thing amongst "the *Pagans*, and not to be publicly and plainly "declared. Wherefore it was never simply represented "to the People, but was most obscurely delivered; "and vail'd under Allegories, or Parables, or Hiero-"glyphics; and especially amongst the Egyptians, "Chaldeans, and the Oriental Nations.—They allego-"rized many things of nature, and particularly the "heavenly bodies—They allegorized all their ancient "fables and stories, and pretended to discover in them "the secrets of Natural Philosophy, Medicine, Politics, "and in a word all Arts and Sciences. The works "of *Homer* in particular have furnished infinite materials "for all sorts of allegorical Commentators to work "upon.—The ancient Greek Poets were reputed to "involve divine, and natural, and historical notions of "their Gods under mystical and parabolical expres-"sions.—The *Pythagorean* Philosophy was wholly de-"livered in mystical language, the signification whereof "was entirely unkown to the world abroad—The *Stoic* "Philosophers are particularly famous for allegorizing "the whole heathen Theology—We have several "treatises of heathen Philosophers on the subject of "allegorical interpretation *."

If now this kind of *allegorizing*, which involved the Proposition in a *double sense*, was in use amongst the Pagan Oracles, Divines, Philosophers and Poets, is not the understanding ancient writings *allegorically*, or in a *double sense*, agreeable to all rational, scholastic rules of interpretation? Surely, as much so as the understanding mere *metaphorical* expressions in a *tropical* signification; whose propriety no one ever yet called in question. For the sense of *Propositions* is imposed as arbitrarily as the sense of *words*. And if men, in the communication of their thoughts, agree to give, on some occasions, a *double* sense to *Propositions*, as well as on

* Grounds, &c. pp. 83, 84, 85, 86.

others

others, a *single*, the interpreting the first in *two* meanings is as agreeable to all scholastic rules, as interpreting the other in *one*: And *Propositions*, with a double and single sense, are as easily distinguishable from each other, by the help of the context, as *Words* with a literal and figurative meaning. But this great Philosopher seems to have imagined, that the *single sense of a Proposition* was imposed by Nature; and that therefore, giving them a *double meaning*, was the same offence against Reason as the deviating from the unity of pure *Theism* into *Polytheism*: and, consequently, that the universal lapse into ALLEGORY and IDOLATRY rendered neither the one nor other of them the less absurd *.

I say, he seems to think so. More one cannot say of such a Writer. Besides, he seems to think otherwise, where, in another place, as if aware that *Use* would rescue a *double sense* from his *irrational* and *unscholastic* censure, he endeavours to prove, that the Jews, during the prophetic period, did not use this allegoric way of expression. Now if we be right in this last conjecture about his meaning, he abuses the terms he employs, under a miserable quibble; and, by *scholastic* and *unscholastic rules*, only means interpreting in a *single* or a *double sense*.

The Reader perhaps will be curious to know how it happened, that this great Reasoner should, all at once, overthrow what he had been so long labouring to build. This fatal issue of his two books of the GROUNDS, &c. and SCHEME, &c. had these causes:

1. He had a pressing and immediate *objection* to remove. And, as he had no great stock of argument, and but small forecast, any thing, at a plunge, would be received, which came to his relief.

The objection was this—"That the allegorical interpretations of the Apostles were not designed for "absolute proofs of Christianity, but for arguments *ad*

* See note [EE] at the end of this Book.

"*homines*

" *homines* only to the Jews, who were accustomed to " that way of reasoning," p. 79.—Thus, he himself tells us, some Divines are accustomed to talk. He gives them indeed a solid answer; but he dreams not of the consequence. He says, this *allegoric reasoning* was common to all mankind. Was it so? Then the grand Proposition on which his whole Work supports itself is entirely overthrown. For if all mankind used it, the method must needs be *rational* and *scholastic*. But this he was not aware of. What kept him in the dark, was his never being able to distinguish between the USE and the ABUSE of this mode of information. These two things he perpetually confounds. *The Pagan Oracles delivered themselves in allegories*;—this was the use: *Their later Divines turned all their Religion into allegory*;—this was the abuse. *The elder* Pythagoreans *gave their Precepts in allegory*;—this was the use: *The later* Stoics *allegorized every thing*;—this was the abuse. Homer *had some allegories*;—this was the use: *His Commentators turned all to allegory*;—and this again was the abuse. But though he has talked so much of these things, yet he knew no more of them than old JOHN BUNYAN; whose honester ignorance, joined to a good meaning, disposed him to *admire* that which the malignity of our Author's folly inclined him to *decry*: and each in the like ridiculous extreme.

2. But the other cause of this subversion of his own system was the delight he took to blacken the splendour of Religion. He supposed, we may be sure, it would prove an effectual discredit to Revelation, to have it seen, that there was this conformity between the Pagan and Jewish method of delivering Religion and Morality. His attempt hath been already exposed as it deserves*. But in this instance it labours under much additional folly. For the *different* reasons which induced the Propagators of Paganism, and the Author of Judaism,

*. See Book iv. § 1. at the end.

to employ the *same* method of information, are obvious to the meanest capacity, if advanced but so far in the knowledge of nature to know, that *different ends* are very commonly prosecuted by the *same means*. The Pagans allegorized in order to hide *the weakness and absurdities of their national Religions*; the Author of Judaism allegorized in order to prepare his followers *for the reception of a more perfect Dispensation*, founded on Judaism, which was preparatory of it; and, at the same time, to *prevent* their *premature rejection* of Judaism, under which they were still to be long exercised.

Thus we see how this formidable Enemy of our Faith has himself overturned his whole Argument by an unwary answer to an occasional objection. But this is but *one*, of a Work full of contradictions. I have no occasion to be particular, after removing his main Principles; yet, for the Reader's diversion, I shall give him a taste of them. In his 81st page, he says—*And there has been for a long time, and is at this time as little use of allegory in those respects amongst them* [the Jews] *as there seems to have been during the time the books of the Old Testament were written, which seem the most plain of all ancient Writings, and wherein there appears not the least trace of a typical or allegorical intention in the Authors, or in any other* Jews *of their times.* Yet it is but at the 85th page that we find him saying—*And in this* [*viz.* in delivering his Philosophy in mystical language] PYTHAGORAS *came up to* SOLOMON's *character of wise men, who dealt in dark sayings, and acted not much unlike the most divine Teacher that ever was. Our Saviour spake with many parables*, &c. Now it seems, it was Solomon's character of *wise men*, that they dealt in *dark sayings*. But these wise men were the Authors of the Jewish Scriptures. And yet he had but just before assured us, *That the books of the Old Testament seem the most plain of all ancient Writings, and wherein there appears not the least trace of a typical*

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or allegorical intention in the Authors, or in any Jews of their times.

Again, in his pages 85, 86, he says, "The Pythagorean "Philosophy was wholly delivered in mystical language; "the signification whereof was intirely unknown to the "world abroad, and but gradually explained to those of "the sect, as they grew into years, or were proper to be "informed—The Stoic Philosophers were particularly "famous for *allegorizing*—We have several treatises of "heathen Philosophers on the subject of allegorical inter- "pretation—And from Philosophers, Platonists, and "Stoics, the famous Origen is said to have derived a "great deal of his skill in allegorizing the books of the "Old Testament." This he says, and yet at the 94th page he tells us,—"That the Apostles, and particularly St. "Paul, wholly discarded all other methods of reasoning "used by Philosophers, except the *allegorical*: and set "that up as the true and ONLY reasoning proper to "bring all men to the faith of CHRIST: and the Gen- "tiles were to be WHOLLY beat out of the literal way "of arguing, and to argue as *became Jews*. And the "event of preaching the Gospel has been suited to "matters considered in this view and light. For we know "that the WISE did not receive the Gospel at first, and "that they were the latest Converts: *Which* PLAINLY "*arose from their using maxims of reasoning and dis-* "*puting* WHOLLY *opposite to those of Christians.*" By these *wise*, can be meant none but the Pagan Philoso- phers: and these, according to our Author, were altoge- ther given up to mystery and allegory. Yet St. Paul, and the rest of the Apostles, who, he says, were likewise given up to the same method, could make no converts amongst these *wise* men. Why? It would now methinks have suited his talents as well as temper, to have told us, it was *because two of a trade could not agree:* No, says this incomparable Logician, *it was because the Philoso-*

phers used maxims of reasoning and disputing wholly opposite to the Christians.

What now but the name and authority of *Freethinking* could hinder such a Writer from becoming the contempt of all who know either how to make, or to understand an argument? These men profane the *light* they receive from *Revelation* in employing it to rob the treasures of the *Sanctuary*. But RELIGION arrests them in the *manner*, and pronounces one common doom upon the whole race.

"- - - Ne IGNIS NOSTER facinori præluceat,
" Per quem colendos censuit Pietas Deos,
" VETO ESSE TALE LUMINIS COMMERCIUM*."

Hence the fate that attends them all, in the inseparable connexion between *impiety* and *blundering*; which always follow one another as the crime and the punishment.

If it be asked then, What it is that hath so strangely prejudiced our modern Reasoners against this ancient mode of information by TYPICAL and SECONDARY senses? I answer, the folly of Fanatics, who have abused it in support of the most abominable nonsense. But how unreasonable is this prejudice! Was there ever any thing rational or excellent amongst Men, that hath not been thus abused? Is it any disparagement to the *method of Geometers*, that some conceited writers on Morality and Religion have of late taken it up, to give an air of weight and demonstration to the whimsies of pedantic importance? Is there no truth of nature, or reasonableness of art, in *Grammatical construction*, because cabalistic Dunces have in every age abused it to pervert all human meaning? We might as well say that the ancient Egyptians did not write in Hieroglyphics, because Kircher, who endeavoured to explain them, hath given us nothing but his own visions, as that the ancient Jews had not *types* and *secon-*

* Phæd. l. iv. Fab. 10.

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dary senses, because modern Enthusiasts have allegorized their whole Story.

But I from these *abuses* would draw a very contrary conclusion. The rage of *allegorizing* in Religion hath infected all ages: Can there be a stronger proof that the original mode was founded in the common conceptions of mankind? The Pagans began the *abuse*; and the pestilent infection soon spread amongst the followers of true Religion.

1. The early propagators of PAGANISM, in order to hide the weakness of the national Religion, delivered many things in Types and Allegories. But a growing Superstition, accompanied with an equal advance in knowledge, made it at length impossible to screen the folly even of the less obnoxious parts from common observers. Their Successors therefore, to support its credit, went on where the others had left off; and allegorized all the traditional stories of their Gods into *natural*, *moral*, and *divine* Entities. This, notwithstanding the extravagance of the means, fully answered the end.

2. The JEWS ingrafted on *their* predecessors, just as the Pagans had done on *theirs*; and with the same secular policy: For being possessed with a national prejudice, that their Religion was to endure for ever, and yet seeing in it the marks of a carnal, temporary, and preparatory Dispensation, they cunningly allegorized its Rites and Precepts into a *spiritual* meaning, which covered every thing that was a real deficiency in a Religion which they considered as perfect and perpetual. Both these sorts of Allegorists therefore had reason in their rage.

3. Afterwards came a set of CHRISTIAN Writers, brought out from amongst *Jews* and *Gentiles*; and these too would needs be in the fashion, and allegorize their Religion likewise; but with infinitely less judgment than the others; though alas! with equal success. In their hands, the *end* proved as hurtful to truth as the *means* were extravagant in nature. And how should it be other-

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wise in a Religion both *divine* and *perfect?* For in such an one, there was nothing either to HIDE or to SUPPLY. We have shewn that *types* and *secondary senses* were employed in the Jewish Religion for the *sake of the Christian*, of which the Jewish was the groundwork and preparation. When therefore the *Christian* was come, these modes of information must needs cease, there being no farther occasion, nor indeed room, for them. As clear as this is to the lowest understanding, yet would some primitive Doctors of the Church needs contend with Jewish Rabbins, and Pagan Philosophers, in all the rage of *allegorizing:* Deaf to the voice of Reason, which called aloud to tell them, that those very arguments, which proved that there were, and must needs be, *types* and *secondary* senses in the *Old Testament*, proved as plainly that there neither were, nor could be any, in the *New*. Thus, to the inexpressible damage of Christianity, they exposed a *reasonable Service*, and a *perfected Dispensation* (where nothing was taught but Truth, plain, simple, and open) to the laughter and contempt of Infidels; who, bewildered in the universal maze of this *allegoric* mode of information, were never able to know what it was in its original, nor how to distinguish between the *use* and the *abuse*.

To CONCLUDE, Let not the Reader think I have been all this while leading him out of the way, while I have engaged his attention to the *book of* JOB; to the *Case of* ABRAHAM; and to TYPES *and secondary senses* under the Jewish Dispensation. All these strictly belong to the Argument:

1. First, as they greatly contribute to shew the HARMONY *of Truth*; and how all the parts of the Jewish Dispensation support and illustrate one another.

2. Secondly, as they contribute to shew the UNIFORMITY of it; and how the Holy Spirit, quite throughout GOD's grand economy, from his first giving of the Law to the completion of it by the Gospel, observed the same unvaried

unvaried method of the GRADUAL COMMUNICATION *of Truth.*

3. Thirdly, as they contribute to shew the FOLLY of those who contend that the Christian Doctrine of a Future State was revealed to the early Jews; since this opinion destroys all the reason of a *secondary sense* of Prophecies: and of how great importance the reality of *this sense* is to the truth of Christianity hath been largely explained: For how can it be known with certainty, from the Prophecies themselves, that they contain *double senses*, but from hence, that the *old* Law was preparatory to, and the rudiment of, the *new?* How shall this *relation* be certainly known, but from hence, that *no future state* of Rewards and Punishments is to be found in the Mosaic Dispensation*? So close a dependence have all these important Principles on one another.

RECAPITULATION.

AND now, if the length of the Demonstration have not tired out the Reader's patience, or, to speak more properly, if length of time have not worn out his attention to the Subject, it may be proper (the Argument being here concluded) to take a retrospective view of the whole, as it hath been inforced in this and the preceding Volume†. For the deep Professor, who hath digested his Theology into Sums and Systems, and the florid Preacher, who never suffered his thoughts to expatiate beyond the limits of a pulpit-essay, will be ready to tell me, that I had promised to DEMONSTRATE THE DIVINE LEGATION OF MOSES; and that now I had written two large Volumes on that subject, "all that they could find in them were Discourses on the foundation of Morality—the origin of civil and religious Society—the Alliance between Church and State—the policy of Lawgivers—the Mysteries of the Priests—and the opinions of the *Greek* Philosophers—The Antiquity of Egypt—their Hieroglyphics—their

* See Note [FF] at the end of this Book.

† Books I. II. III. & IV. V. VI. originally appeared in two Vols. 4to.

Heroes—and their Brute-worship. That, indeed, at last I speak a little of the Jewish policy; but I soon break away from it, as from a subject I would avoid, and employ the remaining part of the Volume on the Sacrifice of Isaac—on the book of Job—and on primary and secondary Prophecies. But what (say they) is all this to *The Divine Legation of Moses?*

Dic, Posthume! de tribus Capellis."

To call the Topic I went upon a PARADOX, was said, without doubt, to my discredit; but not to see that I had proved it in form, will, I am afraid, redound to their own. Yet I had already bespoke their best attention in the words of Cicero, who, I believe, often found himself in my situation: "Video hanc primam ingressionem meam non ex ORATORIS disputationibus ductam, sed è media Philosophia repetitam, et eam quidem cum antiquam tum subobscuram, aut REPREHENSIONIS aliquid, aut certe ADMIRATIONIS habituram. Nam aut mirabantur QUID HÆC PERTINEANT AD EA QUÆ QUÆRIMUS: quibus satisfaciet res ipsa cognita, ut non sine causa ALTE repetita videatur; aut reprehendent, QUOD INUSITATAS VIAS INDAGEMUS, TRITAS RELINQUAMUS. Ego autem me sæpe *nova* videre dicere intelligo cum *pertita* dicam, sed *inaudita* plerisque*."

But as this Apology hath not answered its purpose, and as the ARGUMENT is indeed drawn out to an uncommon length; raised upon a great variety of supports; and sought out from every quarter of antiquity, and sometimes out of corners the most remote and dark; it was the less to be admired if every *inattentive* Reader did not see their force and various purpose; or if every *attentive* Reader could not combine them into the body of a completed Syllogism; and still less if the envious and the prejudiced should concur to represent these Volumes as an indigested and inconnected heap of discourses, thrown out upon one another, to disburthen a common-place. For the satisfaction therefore of the more candid, who

* Cicero, acknow-

acknowledge the fairness of the attempt, who saw something of the progress of the argument, but misled by the notice of a remaining part, neglected to pursue the proof to the CONCLUSION here deduced, I shall endeavour to lay open, in one plain and simple view, the whole conduct of these mysterious Volumes.

Nor shall I neglect the other sort of Readers, though it be odds we part again as dissatisfied with one another as the Toyman of Bath and his Customer: Of whom the story goes, that a grave well-dressed man coming into the shop of this ingenious inventor, and reliever of the distresses of those who are too dull to know what they want, and too rich to be at ease with what they have, demanded to see some of his best reading-glasses; which when he had tried to no purpose, he returned. The Toyman, surprised at so strange a phenomenon, gravely asked him, whether ever he had learnt to read? to which the other as gravly replied, that if he had been so happy, he should have had no need of his assistance. Now, before I bring the distant parts of my Argument to converge, for the use of these dim-sighted Gentlemen, may I ask them, without offence, a similar question? They have ANSWERED; without asking; but not with the same ingenuity.

In reading the LAW and HISTORY of the JEWS, with all the attention I could give to them, amongst the many circumstances peculiar to that amazing Dispensation (from several of which, as I conceive, the divinity of its original may be fairly proved) these two particulars most forcibly struck my observation, THE OMISSION OF THE DOCTRINE OF A FUTURE STATE, and THE ADMINISTRATION OF AN EXTRAORDINARY PROVIDENCE. As unaccountable as the first circumstance appeared when considered separately and alone, yet when set against the other, and their mutual relations examined and compared, the *omission* was not only well explained, but was found to be an invincible medium for the proof of the DIVINE LEGATION OF MOSES: which, as I

believers had been long accustomed to decry from this very circumstance, I chose it preferably to any other. The Argument appeared to me in a supreme degree strong and simple, and not needing many words to inforce it, or, when inforced, to make it well understood.

RELIGION hath always been held necessary to the support of CIVIL SOCIETY, because human Laws alone are ineffectual to restrain men from evil, with a force sufficient to carry on the affairs of public regimen: and (under the common dispensation of Providence) a FUTURE STATE of rewards and punishments is confessed to be as necessary to the support of RELIGION, because nothing else can remove the objections to God's moral Government under a Providence so apparently unequal, whose phænomena are apt to disturb the serious professors of RELIGION with doubts and suspicions concerning it, as it is of the essence of religious profession to believe, *that God is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.*

Moses, who instituted a RELIGION and a REPUBLIC, and incorporated them into one another, stands single amongst ancient and modern Lawgivers, in teaching a RELIGION, without the *sanction*, or even so much as the *mention* of a FUTURE STATE OF REWARDS AND PUNISHMENTS. The same Moses, with a singularity as great, by uniting the Religion and civil Community of the Jews into one incorporated body, made God, by natural consequence, their supreme civil Magistrate, whereby the form of Government arising from thence became truly and essentially a THEOCRACY. But as the *Administration* of Government necessarily follows its *Form*, that before us could be no other than AN EXTRAORDINARY OR EQUAL PROVIDENCE. And such indeed not only the Jewish Lawgiver himself, but all the succeeding Rulers and Prophets of this Republic, have invariably represented it to be. In the mean time, no Lawgiver or founder of Religion amongst any other People ever promised

mised so singular a Distinction; no Historian ever dared to record so remarkable a Prerogative.

This being the true and acknowledged state of the case; Whenever the Unbeliever attempts to disprove, and the Advocate of Religion to support, the divinity of the Mosaic Dispensation, the obvious question (if each be willing to bring it to a speedy decision) will be, "Whether "the EXTRAORDINARY PROVIDENCE thus prophetically "promised, and afterwards historically recorded to be "performed, was REAL or PRETENDED only?"

We Believers *hold* that it was REAL: and I, as an Advocate for Revelation, undertake to *prove* it was so; employing for this purpose, as my medium, THE OMISSION OF A FUTURE STATE OF REWARDS AND PUNISHMENTS. The argument stands thus:

If Religion be necessary to civil Government, and if Religion cannot subsist, under the common dispensation of Providence, without a future state of Rewards and Punishments; so consummate a Lawgiver would never have neglected to inculcate the belief of such a state, had he not been well assured that an EXTRAORDINARY PROVIDENCE was indeed to be administered over his People: Or were it possible he had been so infatuated, the impotency of a Religion wanting a future state must very soon have concluded in the destruction of his Republic: Yet nevertheless it flourished and continued sovereign for many ages.

These two proofs of the proposition *(that an extraordinary providence was really administered)* drawn from the THING OMITTED and the PERSON OMITTING, may be reduced to the following SYLLOGISMS.

I. Whatsoever Religion and Society have no future State for their support, must be supported by an extraordinary Providence.

The Jewish Religion and Society had no future State for their support;

Therefore

Therefore the Jewish Religion and Society were supported by an extraordinary Providence.

And again,

II. The Ancient Lawgivers universally believed, that a Religion without a future State could be supported only by an extraordinary Providence.

Moses, an Ancient Lawgiver, learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians (the principal branch of which wisdom was inculcating the doctrine of a future state) instituted such a Religion:

Therefore Moses believed that his Religion was supported by an extraordinary Providence.

This is the ARGUMENT OF THE DIVINE LEGATION; plain, simple, and convincing, in the opinion of the Author; a PARADOX, in the representation of his Adversaries: Attempts of this nature being still attended with the fortune they have long undergone. *William of Newbourg*, speaking of Gregory the Eighth, tells us, that he was, "Vir plane & sapientiæ et vitæ sinceritate conspicuus, æmulationem Dei habens in omnibus *secundum scientiam*; et *superstitiosarum consuetudinum* quarum in Ecclesia per quorundam rusticam simplicitatem citra Scripturarum auctoritatem multitudo inolevit, *Reprehensor acerrimus*. Unde *a quibusdam minus discretis* putatus est turbato per nimiam abstinentiam cerebro delirare." This curious passage shews what hath been, and what is likely to be, the fate of all opposers of foolish and superstitious practices and opinions, when opposers are most wanted, that is to say, to be thought mad. Only one sees there was this difference between *William*'s age and our own. In the time of good Gregory, they were the *People of least discretion* who passed this judgment on every Reformer's head-piece; whereas in our times, they are the *more discreet* who have made this discovery.

Our Author's adversaries proved to be of two sorts,

FREETHINKERS and SYSTEMATICAL DIVINES.' Those denied the Major of the two Syllogisms; These, the Minor; yet one could not be done without contradicting the universal voice of Antiquity; nor the other, without explaining away the sense, as well as letter, of sacred Scripture. Had it not been for this odd combination, my *Demonstration of the Divine Legation of Moses* had not only been as *strong* but as *short* too as any of Euclid's: whose theorems, as Hobbes somewhere observes, should they ever happen to be connected with the passions and interests of men, would soon become as much matter of dispute and contradiction as any moral or theological Proposition whatsoever.

It was not long, therefore, before I found that the discovery of this important Truth would engage me in a full dilucidation of the three following Propositions—

1. "That inculcating the doctrine of a future state of "rewards and punishments, is necessary to the well-being "of civil Society."

2. "That all mankind, especially the most wise and "learned nations of Antiquity, have concurred in be-"lieving and teaching, that this doctrine was of such "use to civil Society."

3. "That the doctrine of a future state of rewards "and punishments is not to be found in, nor did make "part of, the Mosaic Dispensation."

—Neither a short nor an easy task. The two first requiring a severe search into the *Religion*, the *Politics*, and the *Philosophy* of ancient times: And, the latter, a minute examination into the *nature and genius of the Hebrew Constitution.*

To the first part of this enquiry, therefore, I assigned the first Volume of this work; and to the other, the second.

I.

I. The *first* Volume begins with proving the MAJOR of the first Syllogism, *that whatsoever Religion and*

Society

Society have no future State for their support, must be supported by an extraordinary Providence. In order to which, the FIRST PROPOSITION was to be inforced, That *the inculcating the doctrine of a future state of rewards and punishments is necessary to the well-being of Society.*

This is done in the following manner—By shewing that CIVIL SOCIETY, which was instituted as a remedy against force and injustice, falls short, in many instances, of its effects—as it cannot, by its own proper force, provide for the observance of above one third part of moral duties; and, of that third, but imperfectly: and further, which is a matter of still greater importance, that it totally wants the first of those two great hinges on which Government is supposed to turn, and without which it cannot be carried on, namely, REWARD and PUNISHMENT. Some other coactive power was therefore to be added to civil Society, to supply its wants and imperfections. This power is shewn to be no other than RELIGION; which, teaching the just Government of the Deity, provides for all the natural deficiencies of civil Society. But this government, it is seen, can be no otherwise supported than by the general belief of a *future state*; or of an *extraordinary Providence*, that is, by a Dispensation of things very different from what we see administered at present.

This being proved, the discourse proceeds to remove objections.—The Reader observes, that the steps and gradations of this capital truth advance thus,—A future state is necessary as it supports Religion—Religion is necessary as it supports Morality—And Morality as it supports (though it be reciprocally supported by) civil Society, which only can procure such accommodations of life as man's nature requires. Hence I concluded, that the Doctrine of a future state was necessary to civil Society, under the present administration of Providence.

Now there are various kinds or rather degrees of LIBERTINISM. Some, though they own Morality to be necessary

necessary to Society, yet deny Religion to be necessary. Others again deny it even to Morality.—As both equally attempt to break the chain of my reasoning, both come equally under my examination. And, opportunely for my purpose, a great Name in the first instance, and a great Book, in the second, invited me to this entertainment.

1. The famous M. BAYLE had attempted to prove, that *Religion* was not necessary to Society; and that, simple *morality*, as distinguished from Religion, might well supply its place: which Morality too, an ATHEIST might completely possess. His arguments in support of these propositions I have carefully examined: and having occasion, when I came to the last of them, to enquire into *the true foundation of Morality*, I state all its pretences, consider all its advantages, and shew that OBLIGATION, properly so called, proceeds from WILL, and from WILL only. This enquiry was directly to my point, as the result of it proves that the *morality* of the *Atheist* must be without any true foundation, and consequently weak and unstable. It had a further propriety, as the Religion, whose divine original I am here attempting to demonstrate, has founded *moral obligation* in *Will* only; and had a peculiar expediency likewise, as it is become the fashion of the times to seek for this *foundation* any where but there where Religion has placed it.

2. But MANDEVILLE, the Author of *the Fable of the Bees*, went a large step further; and pretended to prove that MORALITY was so far from being necessary to Society, that it was *vice* and not *virtue* which rendered states flourishing and happy. This execrable Doctrine, that would cut away my Argument by the roots, was presented to the People with much laboured art and plausible insinuation. It was necessary therefore to confute and expose it. This I have done with the same care, but with better faith than it was inforced.

In this manner I endeavoured to prove the MAJOR PROPOSITION of the first Syllogism: and with this,

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the first book of *the Divine Legation of Moses* concludes.

II. The second Book begins with establishing the MAJOR of the second Syllogism, *That the ancient Lawgivers universally believed that a Religion without a future state could be supported only by an extraordinary Providence.* In order to which, the SECOND PROPOSITION was to be inforced, *That all mankind, especially the most wise and learned nations of Antiquity, have concurred in believing and teaching, that the Doctrine of a future state was necessary to the well-being of civil Society.*

The proof of this proposition divides itself into two parts—The *conduct of the* LAWGIVERS; and *the opinion of the* PHILOSOPHERS.

The first part is the subject of the *present* Book; as the second part is of the *following*.

In proving this proposition from the *conduct of the Lawgivers*, I shew,

1. Their care to PROPAGATE *Religion in general*, 1. As it appears from the *effects*, the state of Religion every where in the civilized World. 2. As it appears from the *cause*, such as their universal pretence to *inspiration*, in order to instil the belief of the Divine Superintendency over human affairs; and such as their universal practice in *prefacing their Laws*, in order to establish the belief of that Superintendency. And here it should be observed, that in proving their care to propagate *Religion in general*, I prove their care to propagate the doctrine of a *future state of Rewards and Punishments*; since there never was a formed Religion in the World, the *Jewish* excepted, of which this Doctrine did not make an essential part.

2. But I shew, in the second place, their care to propagate *this Doctrine*, with more than common attention and assiduity. And as the most effectual method they employed to this end was the institution of the MYSTE-

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RIES, a large account is given of their rise and progress, from Egypt into Greece, and from thence, throughout the civilized world. I have attempted to discover the APOPPHTA, or hidden doctrines of these Mysteries, which were THE UNITY OF THE GODHEAD and the ERROR OF THE GROSSER POLYTHEISM, namely, *the Worship of dead men, deified.* This discovery not only confirms all that is advanced, concerning the rise, progress, and order of the several specieses of Idolatry, but clears up and rectifies much embarras and mistake even of the most celebrated Moderns, such as *Cudworth, Stillingfleet, Prideaux, Newton,* &c. who, contrary to the tenour of Holy Scripture, in order to do imaginary honour to Religion, have ventured to maintain, that *the one true God was generally known and worshipped in the Pagan World*; for, finding many, in divers countries, speaking of the *one true God,* they concluded, that he must needs have a *national Worship.* Now the Discovery of the ἀπόῤῥητα of the *Mysteries* enables us to explain the perfect consistency between sacred and profane Antiquity; which, left to speak for themselves, concur to inform us of this plain and consistent truth, "That the Doctrine of the *one true God* was indeed taught in all places, but as a profound secret, to the FEW, in the celebration of their mysterious Rites; while, in the Land of JUDEA alone, he had a *public and national Worship.*" For to the *Hebrew* PEOPLE *alone,* (as Eusebius expresses it) *was reserved the honour of being* INITIATED *into the knowledge of the Creator of all things.* And of this difference, God himself speaks by the Prophet,—*I have not* spoken IN SECRET, IN A DARK PLACE OF THE EARTH*. And the holy Apostle Paul informs us of the *consequence* of that *mysterious* manner of teaching the true God amongst the Pagan nations, that when, by this means, they came to the *knowledge* of him, *they glorified him not as God*†.

* Isaiah xlv. 19. † Rom. i. 21.

To confirm and illustrate my account of the MYSTERIES, I subjoin a Dissertation on *the sixth Book of Virgil's Æneis*; and another on *the Metamorphosis of Apuleius*. The first of which books is shewn to be one continued description of the *Eleusinian Mysteries*; and the other to be purposely written to recommend the use and efficacy of the *Pagan Mysteries in general*.

And here the attentive Reader will observe, that throughout the course of this whole argument, on the conduct of the ancient LAWGIVERS, it appears, that all the fundamental principles of their Policy were borrowed from EGYPT. A truth which will be made greatly subservient to the *minor* of the second Syllogism; that *Moses*, though learned in all the Wisdom of Egypt, yet *instituted the Jewish Religion and Society without a future State*.

From this, and from what has been said above of MORAL OBLIGATION, the intelligent Reader will perceive, that, throughout *the Divine Legation*, I have all along endeavoured to select for my purpose such kind of arguments, in support of the *particular* question in hand, as may, at the same time, illustrate the truth of *Revelation in general*, or serve as principles to proceed upon in the *progress of the present Argument*. Of which will be given, as occasion serves, several other instances in the course of this review.—And now having shewn the Legislators care to *propagate* Religion in general, and the Doctrine of a future state of Rewards and Punishments in particular (in which is seen their sense of the inseparable connexion between them); I go on, to explain the contrivances they employed to perpetuate the knowledge and influence of them: by which it appears that, in their opinion, RELIGION was not a temporary expedient, useful only to secure their own power and authority, but a necessary support to civil Society itself.

1. The first instance of this care was, as we shew, their ESTABLISHING A NATIONAL RELIGION, *protected by the Laws of the State*, in all places where they were concerned. But as Men, ignorant of *true Religion*, could hardly avoid falling into mistakes in contriving the *mode* of this *Establishment*, I have therefore (the subject of my Work being no idle speculation, but such a one as affects us in our highest interests, as Men and Citizens) attempted to deliver the true *Theory* of the *Alliance between Church and State*, as the best defence of the justice and equity of an ESTABLISHED RELIGION.

2. The second instance of their care, I shew to have been the allowance of a GENERAL TOLERATION; which as it would, for the like reason, be as imperfectly framed as an *Establishment*, I have ventured to give the true *Theory* of that likewise. The ancient Lawgiver contrived to *establish* one mode of Religion, by *allying* it to the State, for the sake of its DURATION: He *tolerated* other modes of it, for the sake of their INFLUENCE, for a Religion forced upon man, has none; and the Lawgiver concerns himself with Religion only for the sake of its *influence*.—Discoursing upon this Subject, I was naturally led to vindicate *true Religion* from an aspersion of Infidelity: Where, I shew, that the first persecution for Religion was not that which was *committed*, but that which was *undergone* by the Christian Church: And that the ill success attending its propagation amongst barbarous Nations in our times, is altogether owing to the preposterous method employed for that purpose.—And with this, the second Book of the Divine Legation concludes.

III. The third Book goes on in supporting the MAJOR of the second Syllogism, by *the opinions of the* PHILOSOPHERS. For as the great waste and ravages of time have destroyed most of the Monuments of ancient *Legislation*, I held it not improper to strengthen my position of the sense of their Lawgivers, by that of their Sages and Philosophers. In this is shewn,

1. From their own words, the conviction they in general had of the necessity of the doctrine of *a future state of Rewards and Punishments* to civil society. And, to set this conviction in the strongest light, I endeavour to prove, that even such of them (viz. the several sects of Grecian Philosophers) who did not believe *a future state of Rewards and Punishments*, did yet, for the sake of Society, diligently teach and propagate it.—That they *taught* it, is confessed; that they did *not believe* it, was my business to prove: which I have done by shewing, 1. That they all thought it lawful to say one thing, and think another. 2. That they constantly practised what they thus thought to be lawful: and, 3. That they practised it on the very Doctrine in question.—To explain and verify the two first of these assertions, I had occasion to enquire into the rise, progress, perfection, decline, and genius of the ancient *Greek Philosophy*, under all its several divisions. In which, (as its rise and progress are shewn to have been from *Egypt*) still more materials are laid in for inforcing the *minor* proposition of the second Syllogism.—I then proceed to a *more particular* inquiry into the sentiments of each sect of Philosophy, on this point; and shew from the character and genius of each School, and from the Writings of each man, that none of them did indeed believe the Doctrine of *a future state of Rewards and Punishments*. At the same time it appears, from almost every proof brought for this purpose, that they all thought the Doctrine to be of the highest utility to the State.—Here, in examining the philosophy of PYTHAGORAS, the subject led me, to consider his so celebrated *Metempsychosis*; in which, I take occasion to speak of the *origin of the Pagan Fables*, and the nature of the *Metamorphosis of Ovid*, here shewn to be *a Popular History of Providence*, very regularly and artfully deduced from the most early times to his own: From the whole I draw this conclusion, "that Pythagoras, who so sedulously propagated this species of a future

future state of Rewards and Punishments (the *Metempsychosis*) that he was thought by some to be the author of it, considered it only as a commodious Fable to restrain the unruly populace."

2. To support this fact, it is shewn, in the next place, that these Philosophers not only *did not*, but that they *could not* possibly believe the Doctrine of a future state of Rewards and Punishments, because the belief of it contradicted two Metaphysical principles universally held and *believed* by them, concerning the nature of GOD and of the SOUL; which were, that *the Deity could not hurt any one*; and that *the soul was part of the substance of the Deity, and resolvable again into him.* In explaining and verifying their reception of this latter principle, I take occasion to speak of its original; which, I prove, was *Grecian* and not *Egyptian*; as appears from the genius and character of the two Philosophies; though the spurious books going under the name of *Hermes*, but indeed written by the later Platonists, would persuade us to the contrary. The use of this inquiry likewise (i. e. concerning the *origin* of this principle) will be seen when we come to settle the *character of Moses*, as aforesaid.— But, with regard to the *belief* of the Philosophers on both points, besides the direct and principal use of it, for the support of the *major* of the second Syllogism, it hath (as I said before, it was contrived my arguments should have) two further uses; the one, to serve as a principle in the progress of my general Argument: the other, to illustrate the truth of Revelation in general. For, 1st, it will be a sufficient answer to that solution of the Deists, (to be considered hereafter) that *Moses did not teach the Doctrine of a future state because he did not believe it*, since it is shewn by the strongest evidence, that the not believing a doctrine so useful to Society, was esteemed no reason why the Legislator should not propagate it. 2. It is a convincing proof of the *expediency* of the Gospel of Jesus, that the Sages of Greece, with

whom all the wisdom of the Wise was supposed to be deposited, had *philosophised* themselves out of one of the most evident and useful truths with which mankind has any concern; and a full *justification* of the severity with which the holy Apostles always speak of the *Philosophers* and the *Philosophy of Greece*, since it is hereby seen to be directed only against these pernicious principles; and not, as *Deists* and *Fanatics* concur to represent it, a condemnation of human learning in general.

3. But as now, it might be objected, "that by this representation, we lose on the one hand what we gain on the other; and that while we shew the *expediency* of the Gospel, we run a risque of discrediting its *reasonableness*; for that nothing can bear harder upon this latter quality, than that the best and wisest persons of Antiquity did not believe that which the Gospel was sent to propagate, namely, the Doctrine of a future state of Rewards and Punishments." As this, I say, might be objected, we have given (besides explaining on what absurd principles their *unbelief* rested) a further answer; and, to support this answer, shewn, that the two extremes into which Divines have usually run, in representing the state and condition of *revealed Religion*, are attended with great and real mischiefs to it; while the only view of Antiquity which yields solid advantage to the Christian Cause, is such a one as is here represented for the true: Such a one as shews *natural Reason* to be *clear* enough to *perceive* TRUTH, and the necessary deductions from it *when proposed*, but not generally *strong* enough to *discover* it. He, who of all the Pagan World best knew its force, and was in that very state in which only a true judgment could be passed, has with the greatest ingenuity confessed this truth, "Nam "neque tam est acris acies in naturis hominum et ingeniis, "ut res tantas quisquam, nisi monstratus possit videre; "neque tanta tamen in rebus obscuritas, ut eas peritus "acri vir ingenio cernat, si modo aspexerit." In explaining this matter, it is occasionally shewn, that the great

great and acknowledged superiority of the modern Systems of *Deistical Morality* above the ancient, in point of excellence, is entirely owing to the unacknowledged, and perhaps unsuspected, aid of Revelation.

Thus the Reader sees, in what manner we have endeavoured to prove the MAJOR PROPOSITIONS of the two Syllogisms, that *whatsoever Religion and Society have no future State for their support, must be supported by an extraordinary Providence.* And that, *The ancient Lawgivers universally believed, that a Religion without a future State could be supported only by an extraordinary Providence.* For having shewn, that Religion and Society were unable, and believed to be unable, to support themselves under an *ordinary Providence*, without a future State; if they were supported without that Doctrine, it could be, and could be believed to be, only by an *extraordinary Providence.*

But now as the proof is conducted through a long detail of circumstances, shewing the *absolute necessity* of *Religion* to civil Society; and the *sense* which all the wise and learned amongst the ancients had of that necessity; lest this should be abused to countenance the idle and impious Conceit that RELIGION WAS THE INVENTION OF POLITICIANS, I concluded the third Book and the Volume together, with proving that the Conceit is both IMPERTINENT and FALSE.

1. *Impertinent*, for that, were this account of the origin of Religion true, it would not follow, that the thing itself, was visionary; but, on the contrary, most real, evidently so even from that *universal utility*, on which this its pretended origin is supported. Indeed, against this *utility*, paradoxical men, or men in a paradoxical humour, have often reasoned; such as BAYLE, PLUTARCH, and BACON: Their arguments are here examined: And the *Master sophism*, which runs through the reasoning of all three, is detected and exposed.

2. *False*; for that, in fact, *Religion* existed before the *civil Magistrate* was in being. In proving this point, the matter led me to speak of the *origin of Idolatry*; to distinguish the several species of it; to adjust the order in which they arose out of one another; and to detect the ends of the later Platonists, in their attempts to turn the whole into an ALLEGORY (in which the reasonings of a late Writer in his *Letters concerning Mythology* are considered). And because the rage of ALLEGORISING had spread a total confusion over all this matter, The origin, and progress of the folly, and the various views of its sectators in supporting it, are here accounted for and explained.

But my end and purpose in all this, was not barely to remove an objection against the Truths delivered in this place, but to prepare a reception for those which are to *follow*: For if Religion were so useful to Society, and yet not the invention of the Magistrate, we must seek for its original in another quarter; either from NATURE or REVELATION, or from BOTH.

Such is the subject-matter of the FIRST Volume of *The Divine Legation*: which, as it was thought proper to publish separately, I contrived should not only contain a *part* of that general Argument, but should likewise be a complete Treatise of itself, establishing one of the most important Truths with which man has any concern; namely, THE NECESSITY OF RELIGION FOR THE SUPPORT OF CIVIL GOVERNMENT. And if, in support of this truth, I have entered into a long detail of some capital articles of Antiquity, I presume I shall not need an apology.

II.

We come now to the SECOND VOLUME of *The Divine Legation*, which is employed in proving the MINOR PROPOSITION of the two Syllogisms; the first, that the *Jewish Religion and Society had no future state for their support*:

support: the other, that *Moses, an ancient Lawgiver, and learned in all the Wisdom of Egypt, purposely instituted such a Religion,* in order to which the THIRD GENERAL PROPOSITION was to be inforced; That *the Doctrine of a future state of Rewards and Punishments is not to be found in, nor did make part of, the Mosaic Dispensation.* But in proving the MINOR, a method something different from that observed in proving the MAJOR PROPOSITIONS was to be followed. *These,* in the first Volume, were proved *successively* and in order. But here the MINOR PROPOSITIONS are inforced all the way *together.* And this difference arises from the reason of the thing; the facts, brought to prove the doctrine to be omitted, do, at the same time, *accidentally* shew that the Omission was designed: And the reasons, brought to prove the uses in a designed omission, *necessarily* shew that the Doctrine was omitted.

To proceed therefore with the subject of the SECOND VOLUME.

IV. I just before observed, that the conclusion of the first Volume, which detected the absurdity and falsity of the Atheistic Principle, that *Religion was an invention of Politicians, and a creature of the State,* opened the way to a fair inquiry whether its true original was not as well from REVELATION as from NATURAL REASON.

In the introduction therefore to this second Volume, I took the advantage which that opening afforded me, of shewing that the universal pretence to *Revelation* proves *some* Revelation must be true: That this *true* Revelation must have some characteristic marks to distinguish it from the *false:* And that these *marks* are to be found in the Institutions of MOSES.

But this was only by way of *introduction*; and to lead the Reader more easily into the main road of our inquiry; by shewing that we pursued no desperate adventure, while we endeavoured to deduce the *divinity* of

of Moses's Law from the circumstances of the Law itself.

I proceeded then to the proof of the MINOR PROPOSITIONS, that *the Jewish Religion and Society had no future State for their support:* and that *Moses, an ancient Lawgiver, and learned in all the wisdom of Egypt, purposely instituted such a Religion.* To evince these truths with sufficient evidence, the *nature* of that Institution was to be first understood; which again required a general knowledge, at least, of the *manners* and *genius* of the Hebrew People, and of the *character* and *abilities* of their Lawgiver. Now these having been entirely fashioned on Egyptian models, it was further expedient that we should know *the state of Egyptian superstition and learning* in that early period.

1. In order to this, the following proposition is advanced, that *the Egyptian learning celebrated in Scripture, and the Egyptian superstition there condemned, were the very learning and superstition represented by the Greek Writers as the honour and opprobium of that kingdom.* Where I first state the question; and then shew the equal extravagance of each of those two parties amongst the learned, who have been accustomed to *advance* or to *depress* the high antiquity of Egypt.

1. I corroborate the Proposition, first, by FACT, the testimony of holy Scripture, and of the ancient Greek Writers, set together and supporting one another; and both supported by circumstances regarding the peculiar situation of the land of Egypt. And here the *objections* of the author of *the Sacred and Prophane History of the World connected*, frightened by the common panic of the high antiquity of Egypt, are confuted and exposed.

Secondly, by REASON, in an argument drawn from the nature, origin, and various uses of their so famed HIEROGLYPHICS. Where it is shewn,

1. That this species of writing was employed by the Egyptians as the vehicle of learning, even *after* the inven-

tion of LETTERS: for which no good reason can be assigned but this, that they were applied to the same purpose *before*. Now LETTERS were in use amongst them before the time of *Moses*.

2. Again, it is shewn that the ONIROCRITICS borrowed their art of deciphering dreams from *hieroglyphic Symbols*: but *hieroglyphic Symbols* were the mysterious vehicle of the civil science and of the Theology of the Egyptians. Now ONIROCRITIC or the art of interpreting of dreams was practised in the time of Joseph.

3. And again, It is shewn that ANIMAL-WORSHIP in Egypt arose from the mysterious use of the same *hieroglyphic Symbols*. Now ANIMAL-WORSHIP was established amongst them before the time of *Moses*.

From all this, it appears, that EGYPT was of that high antiquity which *Scripture* and the best *Greek* Writers concur to represent it. By which, we come to understand what were the *specific manners and superstitions* of Egypt in the time of Moses; these being, as it now appears, identically the same with what the Greek Writers have delivered to us.

In the course of this proof from *Reason*, which opens at large the nature, origin, and various kinds of EGYPTIAN HIEROGLYPHICS, I interweave (as the explanation of my subject necessarily required) a detailed history of the various modes of ancient communication amongst men, as well by *real* and *literary* characters, as by *words* and *action*; and shew how SPEECH and WRITING ran parallel in their progress; and influenced, and were influenced by, one another. On the same account, when I come to the origin of BRUTE-WORSHIP, I give the history of the various modes of ancient Idolatry, in the order in which they rose, one out of another.

These things I have not only made to serve in support of the question I am *here* upon, but likewise in support of one question *preceding*, and of one which is to *follow*.

For

For in the history of the *various modes of ancient communication* was laid, as the Reader will find, the foundation of my discourses on the *nature of ancient Prophecies* in the sixth Book.

And, in the history of *the various modes of ancient Idolatry*, the Reader hath a necessary supplement to what had been said before on the same subject, in the latter end of the third book, against the Atheist's pretended origin of Religion.

So studious have I been to observe, what a great master of Reason lays down as the *rule* and *test* of good order in Composition, *That every former part may give strength to all that follow; and every latter bring light unto all before* *.

But the *high antiquity of Egypt*, though proved from *Antiquity* itself, seemed not to be enough secured, while the authority of one *great modern* remained entire, and his reasonings unanswered.

In the next place, therefore, I examine Sir ISAAC NEWTON'S *Chronology of the Egyptian Empire*; a Chronology erected on the supposed *identity of Osiris and Sesostris*; which is a fancy that not only contradicts all *sacred* as well as *profane* antiquity, but, what is still more, the very *nature of things*.

In the course of this confutation, *the causes of that endless confusion in the early Greek history and Mythology*, are inquired into and explained: Which serves, at the same time, to confirm and illustrate all that hath been occasionally said in the latter end of the *third* book, and, here again, in this *fourth*, concerning—the origin and progress of Idolatry—the genius of Pagan Religion—the Gentile modes of worship—and their Theological opinions.

Thus far concerning *the high antiquity of Egypt*. Which, besides the *immediate* purpose of leading us into the true idea of the *Jewish Institution* in general, hath these further uses:

* Hooker.

We

We have seen, in the foregoing Volume, that EGYPT, as it was most famed for the arts of legislation, so it most of all inculcated the doctrine of *a future state of Rewards and Punishments*. Now, if Egypt were indeed of the high antiquity here assigned unto it, that doctrine must needs be of national belief, at the time the Hebrews lived there in slavery. But then they having, as we find in Scripture, thoroughly imbibed the religious notions of the place, must needs be much prejudiced in favour of so reasonable and flattering a Doctrine: Consequently their Lawgiver, who likewise had been bred up in all the learning of Egypt, would, if he had acted only by human direction, have, in imitation of his Masters, taken advantage of this favourable prejudice to make the doctrine of a future state the grand SANCTION of his Religion and Law.

Again, the proof of the *high Antiquity of Egypt* was necessary to vindicate *sacred Scripture*; which all along declares for that Antiquity; and which the DEIST having endeavoured to take advantage of, in opposing Moses's pretence to inspiration, some imprudent BELIEVERS were grown not unwilling to explain away. Sir Isaac Newton's CHRONOLOGY afforded them the aid they wanted: And while it offered itself in support of the *Bible-divinity*, they seemed little attentive to the liberties it had taken with the *Bible-history*.

2. In order to bring on this Truth of the *high antiquity of Egypt* nearer to my purpose, I proceeded to the *second* Proposition; *That the Jewish People were extremely fond of Egyptian manners, and did frequently fall into Egyptian superstitions: and that many of the Laws given to them by the ministry of Moses were instituted partly in compliance to their prejudices, and partly in opposition to those superstitions.* In the proof of the first part of this Proposition, I shew the high *probability* that the Law was instituted with reference to Egyptian manners; and through the proof of the se-

cond,

cond, is deduced a *demonstration* that it was actually so framed.

For a further illustration of this Argument, I give an historical account of the degeneracy of the Hebrew People, and of their amazing propensity to imitate the manners of Egypt, from the time that Moses was first sent upon his Mission, to their entire settlement in the land of Judea: Which fully shews (what will stand us in stead hereafter) that a People so perverse and headstrong needed, in the construction of their civil and religious Institutions, all possible curbs to disorder: Now of all such curbs, the doctrine of a *future state* was ever held the chief in ancient policy; and as this doctrine was so peculiarly Egyptian, they must needs have the most favourable prejudice towards it.

But then, as it might perhaps be objected, that while I am endeavouring to get this way into the interior of the Jewish Constitution, I open a back door to the ravages of Infidelity: it was thought necessary, in order to prevent the Deist's taking advantage of the great Truth contained in the preceding Proposition (which is the second), to guard it by the following (which is the third), viz. *That Moses's Egyptian Learning, and the Laws instituted in compliance to the People's prejudices, are no reasonable objection to the divinity of his Mission.* Where, in explaining the *first part*, which shews what this learning was, and how well it suited with Moses's Mission, I had occasion to inquire into the origin and use of the SCHOOLS OF THE PROPHETS: Which the Reader will find of this further use, viz. To give strength and support to what is said in the sixth Book of the NATURE OF THE JEWISH PROPHECIES; and particularly to what is there observed of GROTIUS's fatal error, in his mode of interpreting them.

And in explanation of the *second part*, having proved the Proposition, That to institute Laws in compliance to popular prejudices, is no reasonable objection to their divine original; having proved this, I say, from the nature

nature of things; the Discourse proceeds to examine all the Arguments which have been urged in support of the contrary opinion, by HERMAN WITSIUS, in his learned Treatise intitled *Ægyptiaca*, that Book having been publicly recommended by Dr. *Waterland*, for *a distinct and solid confutation of Spencer's De Legibus Hebræorum ritualibus.*

And the answer to Witsius's last argument bringing into question the intrinsic value of the *ritual Law*; the famous character of it given by the Prophet EZEKIEL, *of statutes that were not good, and judgments whereby they should not live*—is explained in a large analysis of the whole Prophecy, against an old foolish notion revived by Dr. Shuckford, that these *Statutes* and *Judgments*, here said to be *given* by God, were the *Pagan Idolatries*, which, in defiance of God, they took without leave.

But I go yet further in support of the fourth Proposition, and prove, that *these very circumstances of Moses's Egyptian Learning, and the Laws instituted in compliance to the People's prejudices, are a strong confirmation of the divinity of his Mission.*

1st, For, that one bred up in the arts of Egyptian Legislation could never, on his own head, have thought of reducing an unruly people to government, on maxims of Religion and Policy, fundamentally opposite to all the principles of Egyptian WISDOM, at that time the universal Model on which all the Legislators worked, in reducing a barbarous People to Society. Yet Moses went upon principles diametrically opposite to that WISDOM, when he enjoined the PUBLIC worship of the *one true God only*, and OMITTED *the doctrine of a future state of Rewards and Punishments*, in the institution of his Law and Religion.

2dly, For, that One who *falsely* pretended to receive the whole frame of a national Constitution from God, would never have risked his pretensions by a *ritual Law*, which the people might see was politically instituted,

tuted, partly in compliance to their prejudices, and partly in opposition to Egyptian superstitions.

Here, all the imaginable motives are inquired into, which MOSES, though a mere human Lawgiver, might have had to act in the manner he did; and these motives are shewn to be insufficient to induce a wise Legislator thus to act.—In conclusion, it is made apparent, *that a ritual, contrived to oppose to the reigning superstitions*; and, at the same time, *to prefigure, by its typical nature*, all the essential parts of a future Dispensation, contains a strong INTERNAL ARGUMENT THAT THE RITUAL LAW WAS NOT A MERE HUMAN INVENTION. And with this the fourth Book concludes.

V. What hath been hitherto said, was to let the Reader into the genius of the Jewish Policy in *general*, in order to his judging more exactly of the *peculiar nature* of its Government; that, from thence, he might be enabled to determine, with full certainty, of the matters in question, as they are contained in the two MINOR terms.

1. The *fifth Book*, therefore, comes still nearer to the point, and shews, that the Government instituted by Moses was a THEOCRACY, properly so called, where God himself was the supreme civil Magistrate. It begins with assigning and settling the true reason of the separation of the posterity of Abraham from the rest of mankind;—because this separation has been greatly misunderstood—but principally because the true reason of the *separation* leads us into the use and necessity of a *Theocratic* form of Government.

In evincing this necessity, the justice *of the Law for punishing Idol-worship capitally*, under a Theocracy, is explained: And because the Deist hath been accustomed to urge *this Law* against the divine original of the whole Institution, it is here justified at large, on the principles of natural equity: Which serves, as well a past purpose, viz. the adding strength and support to what hath been said on the subject of TOLERATION, in the second Book;

as

as it does at present, viz. to confirm the *reality of this Theocracy*, which a celebrated dissenting Minister has preposterously gone out of his way to bring in question: whose *reasoning*, therefore, is examined and exposed.

2. This THEOCRACY, thus proved to be *necessary*, was likewise of the most easy introduction, as I have shewn from the notions and opinions of those times, concerning *tutelary Deities*. And here, speaking of the method of Divine Providence, in applying the prejudices and manners of men to the great ends of his Dispensations, I observe, that He is always accustomed to impress on his institution, some characteristic note of difference, to mark it for his own: which leading me to give instances in some of these *notes*, I insist chiefly upon this, "that the Mosaic Religion was *built upon a former*, "namely, the Patriarchal: whereas the various Reli- "gions of the Pagan World were all unrelated to, and "independent of one another." As this was a circumstance necessary to be well attended to, by all who would fully comprehend the nature of the Mosaic Policy, I took the advantage, which the celebrated Author of the *Grounds and Reasons of the Christian Religion* had afforded me, to support this characteristic note, against his idle attempt to prove, that the Pagans, likewise, were accustomed to build one pretended Revelation on another.

3. I proceed, in the next place, to shew, that those prejudices which made the *introduction of a* THEOCRACY *so easy*, occasioned *as easy a defection from it*. In which, I had occasion to explain the nature of the *worship of tutelary Gods*; and of that *Idolatry* wherewith the Israelites were so obstinately besotted.

Both of which Discourses serve these further purposes: the *former*, to support and explain what hath been said in the second Book concerning the *Pagan intercommunity of worship*: and the *latter* (besides a peculiar use to be made of it in the third* Volume) to obviate a popular

* See p. 144 of this Volume.

objection of Unbelievers: who, from this circumstance, of the perpetual defection of the Israelites into idolatry, would infer, that God's Dispensation to them could never have been so convictive as their History represents it; the Objectors having taken it for granted, on the allowance of Believers, that this Idolatry consisted in renouncing the Law of Moses, and renouncing it as dissatisfied with its truth. Both which suppositions are here shewn to be false. This affords an occasion to confute the false reasoning of Lord Bolingbroke; who, from this frequent lapse into Idolatry, infers such a defect and political inability in the Law, as shews its pretence to a divine original to be an imposture.

4. The nature of the THEOCRACY, and the circumstances attending its *erection*, being thus explained, we come next to inquire concerning its *duration*. Here we shew, that, in strict truth and propriety, it subsisted throughout the whole period of the Jewish economy, even to the coming of Christ: In which discourse, the contrary opinions, of an earlier abolition, are all considered and confuted, and the above truth supported and established. In the course of this reasoning, it is shewn, that the famous Prophecy of Jacob, of the *Sceptre's not departing from Judah till the coming of Shiloh*, is a promise or declaration of the existence of the THEOCRACY till the coming of Christ. And as the truth of this interpretation is of the highest importance to Revelation, all the different senses given to this Prophecy are examined, and shewn to be erroneous. And the last of them being one borrowed by Dr. Sherlock, Bishop of London, and received into his Book of *the Use and Intent of Prophecy*, is particularly discussed.

The use to be hereafter made of *the duration of the Theocracy to the coming of Christ*, is to inforce, by this circumstance, amongst many others, the CONNEXION between the two Religions: a truth, though too much neglected,

neglected, yet incumbent on every rational Defender of Revelation to support.

The argument then proceeds to a consideration of the *peculiar consequences* attending the administration of a Theocracy, which brings us yet nearer to our point. Here it is shewn, that one necessary *consequence* was an EXTRAORDINARY PROVIDENCE. And agreeably to this deduction from the *nature of things*, we find, that holy Scripture does, *in fact*, exhibit this very representation of God's Government of Judea; and that there are many favourable circumstances in the character of the Hebrew People, to induce us to believe the representation to be true. Here, many cloudy cavils of the three Doctors, SYKES, STEBBING, and RUTHERFORD, are occasionally removed and dispersed. But the attentive Reader will observe, that my Argument does not require me to prove more in this place, than that holy Scripture REPRESENTS an *extraordinary Providence* to have been administered. The proof of its REAL Administration is established by the MEDIUM of my Thesis, *the omission of the Doctrine of a future state of Rewards and Punishments.* Which answers all objections as to our inadequate conceptions of such an administration; as well as to certain passages of Scripture that seem to clash with its general representation of it. Yet both these sort of objections are, however, considered *ex abundanti.*

As important as the fact is, to our present purpose of an extraordinary Providence thus represented, it has still a further use, when employed amongst those distinguishing *marks* of the truth of Moses's divine Mission in general: for it shews us, the unnecessary trouble and hazard to which he exposed himself, had that Mission been feigned. Had he, like the rest of the ancient Lawgivers, only pretended to *inspiration*, he had then no occasion to propagate the belief of an *extraordinary Providence*; a Dispensation so easy to be confuted.

But by deviating from their practice, and announcing to his People, that their *tutelary God* was become their KING, he laid himself under a necessity of teaching an *extraordinary Providence*; a dead weight upon an Imposture, which nothing but downright folly could have brought him to undergo.

To proceed. After having laid this strong and necessary Foundation, we come at length DIRECTLY to the point in question. If the Jewish Government were a THEOCRACY, administered, as it must be, by an *extraordinary Providence*, the next consequence is, that TEMPORAL REWARDS AND PUNISHMENTS, and not FUTURE, were the SANCTION of their Law and Religion. Thus far, therefore, have our considerations on the *nature alone* of the Jewish Government conducted us: and it is almost to our journey's end: for it fairly brings us up to the proof of our two MINOR Propositions. So necessary, as the Reader now sees, is the long discourse *of the nature of the Jewish Government*.

But, to prevent all cavil, the Argument goes on, and proves in the next place, that the Doctrine of *a future state of Rewards and Punishments*, which could not, from the *nature* of things, be the SANCTION of the Jewish economy, was not in *fact* contained in it at all: nay further, that it was PURPOSELY OMITTED by the great Lawgiver. This is proved from several passages in the Book of *Genesis* and the *Law*.

And here, more fully to evince, that Moses, who, it is seen, *studiously* omitted the mention of it, was *well apprised* of its importance, I shew, that the PUNISHMENT OF CHILDREN FOR THE SINS OF THEIR PARENTS was brought into this Institution purposely to afford some advantages to Government, which the Doctrine of *a future state*, as it is found in all other Societies, amply supplies. This, at the same time that it gives further strength to the position of *no future state in the Mosaic Dispensation*, gives the Author a fair occasion of vindicating

cating the justice and equity of the Law of *punishing Children for the sins of their Parents*; and of proving the perfect agreement between MOSES and the Prophets EZEKIEL and JEREMIAH, concerning it; which hath been, in all ages, the stumbling-block of Infidelity.

But we now advance a step further, and shew, that as Moses did not teach, yea forbore to teach the doctrine of a future state of Rewards and Punishments, so neither had the ancient Jews, that is to say, the Body of the People, any knowledge of it. The proof is striking, and scarce to be resisted by any Party or Profession but that of the SYSTEM-MAKER. The Bible contains a very circumstantial account of this People, from the time of Moses to the great Captivity; not only the history of public occurrences, but the lives of private persons of both sexes, and of all ages, conditions, characters, and complexions; in the adventures of virgins, matrons, kings, soldiers, scholars, parents, merchants, husbandmen. They are given too in every circumstance of life; captive, victorious, in sickness and in health; in full security, and amidst impending dangers, plunged in civil business, or retired and sequestered in the service of Religion. Together with their story we have their compositions likewise: in one place we hear their triumphal; in another, their penitential strains. Here we have their exultations for blessings received; there, their deprecations of evil apprehended: Here they urge their moral precepts to their *contemporaries*; and there again, they treasure up their Prophecies and Predictions for the use of *Posterity*; and on each, denounce the threatenings and promises of Heaven. Yet in none of these different circumstances of life, in none of these various casts of composition, do we ever find them acting on the motives, or influenced by the prospect, of a FUTURE STATE: or indeed, expressing the least hopes or fears, or even common curiosity, concerning it: But every thing they do or say respects the present life only; the good

and ill of which are the sole objects of their pursuits and aversions.

The strength of this argument is still further supported by a view of the *general history* of Mankind; and particularly of those nations most resembling the *Jewish* in their genius and circumstances: in which we find the Doctrine of a future state of Rewards and Punishments, was always pushing on its influence. It was their constant viaticum through life; it stimulated them to war, and spirited their songs of triumph; it made them insensible of pain, immovable in danger, and superior to the approach of death.

This is not all: We observe, that even in the *Jewish* Annals, when this Doctrine was become national, it made as considerable a figure in their History, as in that of any other nation.

It is still further urged, that this conclusion does not rest merely on the *negative silence* of the Bible-history; it is supported on the *positive* declarations contained in it; by which the sacred Writers plainly discover that there was no popular expectation of *a future state* or *resurrection.*

From the *Old Testament* we come to the *New*. By the Writers of which it appears, that the Doctrine of a future state of Rewards and Punishments DID NOT MAKE PART of the Mosaic Dispensation.

Their evidence is divided into two parts; the *first*, proving that TEMPORAL rewards and punishments *were the sanction* of the Jewish Dispensation; The *second* that it had *no other*. And thus, with the most direct and unexceptionable proof of the two MINOR propositions, the fifth Book concludes.

VI. But to remove, as far as possible, all the supports of prejudice against this important Truth, the sixth and last Book of this Volume is employed in examining all those texts of the *Old* and *New* Testament, which had

had been commonly urged to prove, that the Doctrine of a future state of rewards and punishments DID MAKE PART of the Mosaic Dispensation.

And amongst those of the *Old* Testament, the famous passage of the xixth chapter of Job, concerning a *Resurrection* (as it has been commonly understood) holding a principal place, it was judged expedient, for the reasons there given, to examine that matter to the bottom. This necessarily brought on an enquiry into the NATURE and GENIUS of that Book; WHEN WRITTEN, and to WHAT PURPOSE. By the aid of which enquiry, a fair account is given of the sense of that famous Text, consistent with our general Proposition.

But the whole *Discourse on the Book of Job* hath this further use: It provides a strong support and illustration of what will be hereafter delivered concerning the GRADUAL DECAY *of the extraordinary Providence* from the time of *Saul*, to the return from the great *Captivity*.

Yet this is not all. The *Discourse* hath yet a further use, with regard to *Revelation in general*. For the explaining, How the principles of the *Gospel-Doctrine* were opened by degrees, fully obviates the calumnies of those two leaders in Infidelity, TINDAL and COLLINS; who pretend, that the Heads and Governors of the Jews refined their old Doctrines concerning the Deity, and invented new ones: just as the *Priests* improved in knowledge, or the *People* advanced in curiosity; or as *Both* were better taught by the instructions they received from their Masters in the country whither they were led away captive.

The *discourse of Job* being of this importance, we were led to support all the parts of it, from the attacks of various Writers, who had attempted to confute it.

The rest of the Old Testament-texts are gone through with greater dispatch, being divided into two parts. 1. Such as are supposed to teach the separate existence, or, as it is called, the *immortality* of the Soul. And,

2. Such as are supposed to teach *a future state of Rewards and Punishments*, together with a *Resurrection of the body*. In the course of which examination, much light, it is hoped, has been thrown both on the *particular texts* and on the *general question*.

From the texts of the *Old* Testament, the Argument proceeds to examine those of the *New*: Amongst which, the famous *eleventh Chapter of the Epistle to the Hebrews* is not forgotten; the sense of which is cleared up, to oppose to the inveterate mistakes of *Systematical Divines*: And here, occasion is taken to explain the *nature of St. Paul's reasoning against the errors of the Jewish converts*; a matter of highest moment for a right understanding of this Apostle's Letters to the several Churches; and for the further illustration of the general Argument.

As in all this, nothing is taught or insinuated which opposes the doctrine of our excellent Church; common decency required that this *conformity* should be fully shewn and largely insisted on.

Having therefore, all along, gone upon this Principle, "That though a future State of rewards and punish-"ments made no part of the MOSAIC Dispensation, yet "that the LAW had a SPIRITUAL meaning; though not "seen or understood till the fulness of time was come. "Hence the Ritual Law received the nature, and afforded "the efficacy of PROPHECY: In the interim (as is shewn) "*the mystery of the Gospel was occasionally revealed*, "by God, to his chosen servants, the Fathers and "Leaders of the Jewish Nation; and the *dawnings* of it "gradually opened by the Prophets, to the People." Having, I say, gone, all the way, upon this principle, I shew, from the SEVENTH ARTICLE *of Religion*, that it is the very Doctrine of our excellent Church.

And in explaining that part of the ARTICLE which says,—*That they are not to be heard which feign that the old Fathers did look only for transitory Promises*, I support

port this doctrine by the case of ABRAHAM, *who*, our blessed Master tells us, *rejoiced to see his day, and saw it and was glad.*

Here, I attempt to prove, in illustration of this text, that the *Command to Abraham to offer Isaac* was merely an information given, at Abraham's earnest request, in a *representative action*, instead of *words*, of the REDEMPTION OF MANKIND by the great Sacrifice of Christ on the Cross. Which interpretation, if it be the true one, is, I think, the noblest proof that ever was given of the HARMONY between the Old and New Testament.

From this long Dissertation, besides the immediate purpose of vindicating the Doctrine of our national Church, in its *seventh Article*, we gain these two advantages; 1. The first of which is, supporting a real and essential *connexion* between the Mosaic and the Christian Religions. 2. The other is, disposing the Deists to think more favourably of Revelation, when they see, in this interpretation of the COMMAND, all their objections to this part of Abraham's story overthrown.

The matter being of this high importance, it was proper to fix my interpretation on such principles as would leave no room for reasonable doubt or objection: And this was to be done by explaining the nature of those *various modes of information* in use amongst the Ancients; for which explanation, a proper ground had been laid in the discourse on the *Hieroglyphics* in the fourth Book. To all this (for the reason here given) is subjoined a continued refutation of all that Dr. Stebbing has been able to urge against this idea of the *Command.*

Nor is this all. This *Dissertation*, which affords so many new openings into the truths of *Revelation* in general, and so many additional supports to the argument of the *Divine Legation* in particular, hath another very important use. It is a necessary introduction to the long Discourse which follows, concerning PROPHECY.

In

In this (which is the last of the present Volume) I have attempted to clear up and vindicate the logical truth and propriety of *Types in action*, and *secondary senses in speech:* For on the truth and propriety of these depends the divine original of the ancient JEWISH PROPHECIES concerning Christ. A matter much needing a support: For though the greater part of these Prophecies confessedly relate to Jesus only in a *secondary sense*, yet had some men of name, and in the interests of Religion, through ignorance of the true origin and nature of *such senses*, rashly concurred with modern Judaism and Infidelity, to give them all up as *illogical* and *enthusiastic*, to the imminent hazard of the very foundation of CHRISTIANITY.

In the progress of this inquiry, I had occasion to examine, and was enabled, on the principles here laid down, to confute Mr. Collins's famous Work of *the Grounds and Reasons of the Christian Religion*, one of the most able and plausible books ever written amongst us, against our holy Faith; he having borrowed the Argument, and stolen all the reasoning upon it, from the most sagacious of the modern Rabbins; who pretend that none of the Prophecies can relate to Jesus in any other sense than a *secondary*; and that a *secondary sense is illogical and fanatical.*—Had I done no more, in this long work, than explain and clear up, as I have done, this much embarrassed and most important question of the Jewish Prophecies which relate to Christ, and to the Christian Dispensation, I should have thought my time and labour well employed; so necessary to the very being of our holy Faith, is the setting this matter on its true foundation. Thus much may be said in favour of this large dissertation considered in itself alone: But, as part of the Argument of the *Divine Legation* of Moses, it has these more immediate uses:

1. To shew, that those who contend, that the Christian Doctrine of a future State was revealed to the early Jews, destroy

destroy all *use and reason of a secondary sense of Prophecies*; for how shall it be certainly known, from the Prophecies themselves, that they contain *double senses*, but from this *acknowledged* truth, that the *old Law* was preparatory to, and the rudiments of, the *New?* Or how shall this relation between these *two Laws* be certainly known, but from the evidence of this *contested* truth, *that the Doctrine of a future state of Rewards and Punishments is not to be found in the Mosaic Dispensation?* So close a dependence have all these capital Principles on one another.

2. The other more immediate reason for this Dissertation on *Types and secondary Senses* was this: As I had shewn, that a future State of rewards and punishments was not revealed under any part of the Jewish economy, otherwise than by *those modes* of information; it was necessary, in order to shew the *real connexion* between Judaism and Christianity (the truth of the latter Religion depending on that *real connexion)* to prove *those modes* to be logical and rational. For, as on the one hand, had the doctrine of life and immortality been *revealed* under the Mosaic economy, Judaism had been *more* than a rudiment of, and preparation to, Christianity; so on the other, had no *covert* intimations, at all, been given of the doctrine, it had been *less:* that is, the dependency and connexion between the two Religions had not been sufficiently marked out and ascertained. With this Dissertation therefore, so important in its use and application, the sixth and last Book of the second * Volume concludes.

Thus the READER, at length, may see how regularly, and intently, these two * Volumes have been carried on: For, though the AUTHOR (whose passion is not so much a fondness for his *own conceived argument*, as for the honour and support of Religion itself) hath neglected no fair occasion of inforcing every collateral circumstance, which might serve to illustrate the truth of *Revelation*

* See p. 103. of this Vol.

in

in general; yet he never loses sight of his end, but as the precept for conducting the most regular works direct,

Semper ad eventum festinat.

This Volume too, like the first, I thought fit to publish alone, not *merely* for the same reason, that it was a complete and entire work of itself, which *explained the nature and genius of the Jewish Constitution*; but for this additional one, that it *fairly ended and completed the Argument.*

For the first Volume having proved the MAJOR, and the second Volume, the MINOR Propositions of the TWO SYLLOGISMS; my logic teaches me to think, that the CONCLUSION follows of course, viz. THAT THE JEWISH RELIGION AND SOCIETY WERE SUPPORTED BY AN EXTRAORDINARY PROVIDENCE.

Or put it in another light,—Having proved my three principal Propositions,

I. "That the inculcating the Doctrine of a future "State of rewards and punishments, is necessary to "the well-being of civil Society;

II. "That all mankind, especially the most wise and "learned nations of Antiquity, have concurred in be- "lieving, and teaching, that this Doctrine was of such use "to civil Society;

III. "That the Doctrine of a future State of rewards "and punishments is not to be found in, nor did make "part of, the *Mosaic* Dispensation;"

The conclusion is, that therefore THE LAW OF MOSES IS OF DIVINE ORIGINAL.

A CONCLUSION which necessarily follows the premisses contained in these three propositions. Notwithstanding all this, the evidence of their truth proving so various, extending so wide, and having been drawn out to so great a length; What between *inattention* and *prejudice*, the Argument, here brought to its final issue, hath been generally understood to be left imperfect; and the Conclusion

of

of it reserved for another Volume. Yet a very moderate share of reflection might have led the candid Reader to understand, that I had here effectually performed what I had promised, namely, TO DEMONSTRATE THE DIVINE LEGATION OF MOSES. For if it be indeed proved, That the Doctrine of a future state is necessary to the well-being of civil Society, under the ordinary government of Providence—That all mankind have ever so conceived of the matter—That the Mosaic Institution was without this support, and that yet it did not want it,—What follows but that the Jewish affairs were administered by an extraordinary Providence, distributing reward and punishment with an equal hand; and consequently that the MISSION OF MOSES WAS DIVINE?

However, the complaint against the AUTHOR, for not having performed his Convention with the Public, became pretty general. To which a great deal might be said, and perhaps to little purpose. The following Tale will put it in the fairest light. In a solemn Treaty lately concluded between the Governor of one of our American Provinces and the neighbouring Savages, it had, it seems, been stipulated, that the Settlement should supply those Warrior-Tribes with a certain number of good and serviceable Muskets. Which engagement was so ill performed, that at their next general meeting, the Chiefs of the Barbarians complained, that, though indeed the Colony had sent them the number of Muskets agreed upon, yet, on examination, they were all found to be *without Locks*. This mischance (occasioned by the Muskets and the Locks being put into two different cargoes) the Governor promised should be redressed. It was redressed accordingly; and the Locks sought out, and sent. He now flattered himself that all cause of umbrage was effectually removed; when, at their next meeting, he was entertained with a fresh complaint, that the Colony had fraudulently sent them *Locks without Muskets*. The truth was, this brave People, of unimpeached morals,

were

were only defective in their military Logic; they had not the dexterity, till they were first shewn the way, to put the *major* of the Musket and the *minor* of the Musket-lock together; and from thence to draw the *concluding* trigger.

But then it will be said, "If, as is here pretended, the PREMISSES have been indeed proved, in these two Volumes, with all the detail which their importance required, and with all the evidence which a moral subject can supply; and the CONCLUSION, therefore, established with all the conviction which the Laws of logic are able to inforce; Why was another Volume promised? For no other end, as would seem, than to mislead a well-meaning Reader, in the vain pursuit of an Argument already ended."

It was promised for a better purpose—*To remove all conceivable objections against the* CONCLUSION, *and to throw in every collateral light upon the* PREMISSES. For it is one thing to satisfy Truth; and another, to silence her pretended friends. He who defends *Revelation* has many prejudices to encounter; but he who defends it by *Reason* only, has many more.

III.

The THIRD and last Volume, therefore, is destined to SUPPORT what hath been already proved: not, as has been absurdly suggested, to continue and conclude an unfinished Argument.

It consists of three Books, like each of the preceding Volumes.

1. The seventh Book therefore is employed in supporting the MAJOR and the MINOR Propositions of the first Syllogism: in a continued History of the RELIGIOUS OPINIONS of the Jews, from the time of the earlier *Prophets*, who first gave some dark intimations of a different Dispensation, to the time of the *Maccabees*, when the Doctrine of a future state of rewards and punishments was become national.

2. The eighth Book is employed in supporting the MAJOR and MINOR Propositions of the second Syllogism, in which is considered the PERSONAL CHARACTER of Moses and the GENIUS OF THE LAW, as far as it concerns or has a relation to the character of the Lawgiver. Under this latter head, is contained a full and satisfactory Answer to those who may object, "That a revealed Religion with a future state of rewards and punishments is unworthy the Divine Author to whom it is ascribed."

3. The ninth and last Book explains at large the nature and genius of the CHRISTIAN DISPENSATION: For having, towards the end of the eighth Book, examined the PRETENDED REASONS (offered both by Believers and Unbelievers to evade my conclusion) for omitting the Doctrine of a future State of rewards and punishments in the Mosaic Dispensation, I was naturally and necessarily led to inquire into the TRUE. For now, it might be finally objected, "That though, under an extraordinary Providence, there might be *no occasion* for the doctrine of a future State, in support of Religion, or for the ends of Government; yet as that Doctrine is a *truth*, and consequently, under every regimen of Providence, *useful*, it seems hard to conceive, that the Religious Leader of the Jews, because as a *Lawgiver* he could do without it, that therefore, as a *Divine*, he would omit it." The objection is of weight in itself, and receives additional moment from what had been observed in the fifth Book, concerning *the Reason of the Law of punishing Children for the crimes of their Parents.* I held it therefore insufficient barely to reply, "*Moses omitted it, that* "*his Law might thereby stand, throughout all ages, an* "*invincible Monument of the truth of his pretences:*" but proceeded to explain the GREAT AND PRINCIPAL reason of the *omission.* And now, *ventum ad* VERUM *est.*

The whole concludes with one general but distinct view of the entire course of God's universal economy from

from Adam to Christ. In which it is shewn, that if Moses were, in truth, sent from God, *he could not teach* a future State; that Doctrine being out of his Commission, and reserved for him who was at the head of another Dispensation, by which *life and immortality was to be brought to light.*

This Discourse, besides the immediate purpose of supporting and illustrating the ARGUMENT here completed, serves another end, which I had in view, as to the general disposition of the whole work: which was to explain and discriminate the distinct and various natures of the PAGAN, the JEWISH and the CHRISTIAN Religions: the *Pagan* having been considered in the first Volume, and the *Jewish* in the second; the *Christian* is reserved for the third* and last. Let me conclude therefore, in an address to my Reverend Brethren, with the words of an Ancient Apologist†: Quid nobis invidemus, si veritas Divinitatis, nostri temporis Ætate maturuit? Fruamur bono nostro, et recti sententiam temperemus: cohibeatur SUPERSTITIO, IMPIETAS expietur, VERA RELIGIO reservetur.

* As the first and second volumes of the Edition alluded to, contained Books I. to VI. the THIRD volume was intended to comprise the VIIth VIIIth & IXth; but the VIIth & VIIIth Books were never composed (See *Life of the Author*, vol. i. pp. 80 to 89, of this Edition). The IXth Book forms the concluding part of this volume.—*Ed.*

† Minucius Felix.

END OF THE SIXTH BOOK.

APPENDIX

APPENDIX

CONCERNING

THE BOOK OF JOB.

AN excellent Writer having *freely and candidly examined* the late Bishop of London's collection of Sermons, and in page 165 of his *Examination*, asked this question, *Where was Idolatry ever punished by the Magistrate, but under the Jewish Economy?* The Oxford Professor, in the second Edition of his *Prelections, concerning the sacred Poetry of the Hebrews*, thinks fit to give the following answer—"It was punished under "the Œconomy of the Patriarchs, in the families and "under the DOMINION of Abraham, Melchisedec and "JOB. Idolatry spreading wider and wider, Abraham "was called by God from Chaldea, for this end, to be "the father of a People, which, divided from all others, "might continue to worship the true God; to be set up "for an exemplar of true Religion, and to be ready to "give testimony against the worship of vain Deities. "Was not Abraham, therefore (exercising the SOVE-"REIGNTY in his own family) to punish Idolatry? "Were not Melchisedec and Job, and all the SOVE-"REIGNS of Tribes of that time, who still retained the "knowledge and worship of the true God, amidst a "general defection of all the surrounding People, to take "care that their own did not backslide? To curb offend-"ers, and to inflict punishment on the obstinate, the "REBELLIOUS, and on all those who spread abroad "the contagion of this vice."—Ad quæstionem respon-

detur: Sub œconomia Patriarcharum; in familiis, et sub DOMINATU Abrahami, Melchizedechi, Jobi, cæterorumque. Ingruente Idololatria divinitus evocabatur ex Chaldæa Abrahamus: eum in finem, ut fieret pater Gentis, quæ ab aliis omnibus divisa, verum Deum coleret, publicum proponeret exemplum puræ religionis, contraque cultum vanorum numinum testimonium perhiberet. Nonne erat igitur Abrahami in sua familia PRINCIPATUM exercentis proprium officium et munus in Idololatriam animadvertere? Nonne Melchizedechi, Jobi, omniumque tunc temporis in suis Tribubus PRINCIPUM, qui veri Dei cognitionem et cultum in communi fere gentium circumvicinarum defectione adhuc retinebant, cavere, ne sui deficerent; coercere delinquentes; obstinatos et REBELLES, et sceleris contagionem propagantes, supplicio afficere?—*Supplementum ad primam Prælectionum Editionem: Addit. Editionis secundæ*, p. 312.

This is so pleasant an answer, and so little needing the masterly hand of the *Examiner*, to correct, that a few strictures, in a cursory Note, will be more than sufficient to do the business.

1. The *Examiner*, to prove, I suppose, that the book of Job was a dramatic work, written long after the time of the Patriarch, asks, *Where was Idolatry ever punished by the* MAGISTRATE, *but under the Jewish Economy?* The *Professor* answers, *It was punished under the* JOBEAN ECONOMY. And he advances nothing without proof. Does not Job himself say, that Idolatry was *an iniquity to be punished by the Judge?* The *Examiner* replies, that the Job who says this, is an airy Phantom, raised for other purposes than to lay down the Law for the Patriarchal times. The *Professor* maintains that they are all Asses, with ears as long as *Father Harduin*'s, who cannot see that this is the true and genuine old Job.—In good time. *Sub Judice lis est:* And while it is so, I am afraid the learned *Professor* BEGS THE QUESTION; when, to prove that Idolatry was punished by

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the Magistrate, out of the land of Judea, he affirms that KING JOB punished it. If he say, he does not rest his assertion on this passage of the Book of Job alone, but on the sacred Records, from whence he concludes that those CIVIL MAGISTRATES, Abraham and Melchisedec, punished Idolatry; I shall own he acts fairly, in putting them all upon the same footing; and on what ground that stands, we shall now see.

2. The *Examiner* says, *Where was Idolatry ever punished by the Magistrate, but under the Jewish Economy?* A question equivalent to this,—"Where was Idolatry punished by the civil Magistrate on the established Laws of the State, but in Judea? To which, the *Professor* replies, "It was punished by all the Patriarchal Monarchs, by king Job, king Abraham, and king Melchisedec."

Of a noble race was Shenkin.

But here, not one, save the last, had so much as a nominal title to civil Magistracy: And this last drops, as it were, from the clouds, without lineage or parentage; so that, though of *divine*, yet certainly not a Monarch of the true stamp, by *hereditary right*. The Critic therefore fails in his first point, which is, finding out civil Magistrates to do his hierarchical drudgery.

3. But let us admit our *Professor*'s right of investiture, to confer this high office, and then see how he proves, that these his Lieges punished the crime of Idolatry by civil punishment. ABRAHAM, and the Patriarchs his descendants, come first under consideration. *What!* (says he) *was not Abraham, exercising the* SOVEREIGNTY *in his own family, to punish Idolatry?* Hobbes is, I believe, the only one (save our Professor) who holds that "Abraham had a right to prescribe to his family what "Religion they should be of, to tell them what was the "word of God, and to punish those who countenanced "any Doctrine which he had forbidden." *Leviath.* chap. 40.—But God speaking of Abraham, says, *I know*

that he will command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the Lord, &c. Gen. xviii. 19. And Hobbes and our *Professor*, I suppose, regard this declaration as a clear proof of the divine doctrine of RESTRAINT in matters of Religion; especially when interpreted by their darling text of—*force them to enter in.* On the contrary, those who have been bred up in the Principles of *Toleration*, hold it to be a mere testimony (a glorious one indeed) of Abraham's pious and parental care to INSTRUCT his family in the Law of God. And it is well it can go for no more, or I should fear the learned Professor would have brought in Isaac as a backslider to Idolatry; and his Father's laying him on the sacrificial Pile, as a kind of *Auto de fe.* Now, except in these two places of Abraham's History, of such wonderful force to support *intolerant* principles, the Patriarch appears in all others so averse to this inquisitorial spirit, that where God comes down to destroy Sodom, the *Father of the Faithful* intercedes, with the utmost importunity, for that *idolatrous* as well as incestuous City. The truth is this: The usurped right of punishing for opinions was first assumed and long ingrossed by Idolaters. And, if tradition may be believed, Abraham himself narrowly escaped the *Fire* for preaching against its Divinity. But this is not all. From his own conduct, and from the conduct of his posterity, he seems to have made one part of that fidelity *in keeping the way of the Lord* (for which he is so nobly distinguished by God himself) to consist in inculcating the divine doctrine of Toleration. When JACOB and his family, without leave-taking, had departed from Laban, Rachel stole away her father's Gods. The old man followed and overtook them; and complaining of the theft, Jacob frankly answered, *With whomsoever thou findest thy Gods, let him not live.* Now, I would ask, was this condemnation on the offender denounced for *Idolatry*, or for the *Theft?* The words of the Patriarch, which immediately follow, determine this—

Before our brethren discern thou what is thine, with me; and take it to thee. Well, Rachel, by a female stratagem, contrived to keep her father's Gods; for no better purpose, we may be sure, than that for which the good man employed so much pains to recover them. The *theft*, indeed, had it been discovered, would have been *punished by the Judge:* But as for the *Idolatry*, which, from its nature, could not be long hid, the silence of Scripture shews it to have been *coram non Judice.* And so far was Rachel from being doomed to the fire, that we do not find, even her Gods underwent this punishment.

After the affair of the Shechemites, Jacob, by God's command, goes to Bethel: and there, in pious emulation of his grandfather's *care to keep the way of the Lord*, the text tells us, he commanded *his houshold and all that were with him, to put away the strange Gods from amongst them.* They obeyed, all was well; and not a word of *punishing by the Judge.* Indeed, these *Patriarchal Judges* were much better employed, and more suitably to their office, in punishing civil crimes and immoralities, as appears from the adventure of Judah and his daughter-in-law, Tamar.

Melchisedec's story is a short one; he is just brought into the scene to *bless* Abraham in his return from conquest. This promises but ill. Had this *King and Priest of Salem* been brought in *cursing*, it had had a better appearance: for, I think, punishment for opinions, which generally ends in a *Fagot*, always begins with a *curse.* But we may be misled perhaps by a wrong translation. The Hebrew word to *bless*, signifies likewise to *curse*, and, under the management of an intolerant Priest, good things easily run into their contraries. What follows, is his taking *Tythes* from Abraham. Nor will this serve our purpose, unless we interpret these *Tythes* into *Fines for nonconformity*; and then, by the *blessing*, we can easily understand *absolution.* We have seen much stranger things done with the *Hebrew Verity.* If this be not

not allowed, I do not see how we can elicite fire and fagot from this adventure; for I think there is no inseparable connexion between *Tythes* and *Persecution*, but in the ideas of a Quaker.—And so much for *king Melchisedec*.

But the learned *Professor*, who has been hardily brought up in the keen Atmosphere of WHOLESOME SEVERITIES, and early taught to distinguish between *de facto* and *de jure*, thought it needless to enquire into *Facts*, when he was secure of the *Right*. And, therefore, only slightly and superciliously asks, "What! was "not Abraham, by his very *princely office, to punish* "*Idolatry?* Were not Melchisedec and Job, and all the "heads of Tribes, to do the same?" Why, no: and it is well for Religion that they were not. It is for its honour that such a set of persecuting Patriarchs is no where to be found, but in a *poetical Prelection*.

4. For in the last place, let it be observed, that as these Patriarchs *did not de facto* (which appears from their history), so they *could not de jure* (which appears from the laws of Nature and Nations) *punish Idolatry by the Judge*. Because, as hath been shewn, Idolatry is not amenable to civil Justice, but where it becomes *Crimen læsæ Majestatis*. It could not become the crime of lese-majesty under the Patriarchs, unless they had been GODS as well as KINGS. Indeed, they were as much one as the other. However, it is not pretended that their government, though *Regal*, was *Theocratical* likewise. The Patriarchs, therefore, could not *punish Idolatry by the Judge*.

From the *Examiner*, the Professor (without the least provocation given him) proceeds to the Author of *The Divine Legation*; who, he will shew, is as ignorant, absurd, and mad-brained, as Father Harduin himself.

The Author of *The Divine Legation* had said, that the Writer of the book of Job *observed decorum*, in imitating the manners of the early scene which he had proposed

posed to adorn. To this, the Professor objects,—"I can "never bring myself to allow to a SEMI-BARBAROUS "POET, writing after the Babylonian Captivity, such a "piece of subtilty and refinement."—A mighty piece of refinement truly, for a Writer, who lays his scene in an early age, to paint, the best he could, the manners of that age,—"Besides (says the *Professor*) which is the prin- "cipal point, the style savours wonderfully of Antiquity, "and its peculiar character is a certain primitive and "noble simplicity. So that they who degrade this Book "to the times posterior to the Babylonian Captivity, "seem to judge almost as insanely of *Hebrew* literature "as Father Harduin did of the *Roman*, who ascribed the "golden Poems of Virgil, Horace, and the rest, to the "iron ages of the Monks."—Verum Poetæ semibarbaro post Captivitatem scribenti tantam subtilitatem ut concedam, impetrare a me non possum. Porro vero Stylus Poematis, quod vel maximum est, præcipue vetustatem sapit; est ejus peculiaris character αρχαϊσμος. Adeo ut qui id infra Captivitatem Babylonicam deprimunt, non multo sanius in *Hebraicis* judicare videantur, quam in *Latinis* Harduinus; qui aurea Virgilii, Horatii, cæterorumque poemata ferreis Monachorum Sæculis adscripsit. *Idem ib.*

The learned *Professor* is a little unlucky in his comparison. The age of Job, as fixed by him, and the age of the Writer of his history, as fixed by me, run exactly parallel, not with the times of Virgil and Frederic Barbarossa, as he would insinuate, but with those of Ennius and Virgil. Job, the hero of the Poem, lived in an *age* when civil Society was but beginning to shew itself, and what is more, in a *Country* where it never yet was formed: And Ezra (whom I suppose to be the Author of the Poem) was an eminent Citizen in the most perfect civil goverment in the World, which he was sent home to restore, laden with the literary treasures of the East; treasures that had been long accumulating under the warm

influence of a large and powerful Empire. From this second transplantation of the Republic, Science got footing in Judea; and true Religion took deeper root in the hearts of its Inhabitants. Henceforward, we hear no more of their absurd Idolatries. A strict *adherence* to the LAW now as much distinguished them from others, as did the *singularity* of the LAW itself. And a studious cultivation of the LANGUAGE, in which that Law was written, as naturally followed, as it did amongst the Sarazens, who cultivated the Arabic, on the same principle. And to understand how great this was in both, we need only consider, that each had the same aversion to a translation of their Law into a foreign language. It is true, that in course of time, when the Jewish Policy was abolished, and the Nation was become vagabond upon Earth, while the Arabs, on the contrary, had erected a great Empire, a manifest difference arose between them, as to the cultivation of the two Languages.—Yet for all this, the Professor calls Ezra, a SEMI-BARBARIAN; though we agree that he wrote by the inspiration of the Most High; amidst the last blaze indeed, yet in the full lustre of expiring Prophecy.

But the learned Professor has an internal argument from TASTE *, full as good as the other from *Chronology*. "The book of Job savours of Antiquity, and those who cannot relish it, have as depraved a taste as Father Harduin, who could not distinguish Partridge from Horse-flesh."

The truth is, the Greek and Latin Languages having, for many Ages, been the mother-tongues of two of the greatest People upon earth (who had shared between them the Empires of *Eloquence* and of *Arms*) became daily more and more copious by the cultivation of Arts; and less and less pure by the extension of Commerce. In these two languages there yet remains a vast number of

* See what hath been said on this head in the preceding Volume, book vi. § 2.

writings

writings on all sorts of Subjects. So that modern Critics (in the foremost rank of whom will always stand the incomparable BENTLEY) had by long application to them, through their various and progressive refinements and depravations from age to age, acquired a certain sagacity; in passing a tolerable judgment concerning the time of the Writer, by his style and manner. Now Pedantry, which is the ape of Criticism, would mimic the same talent of discernment, in the narrowest and most barren of all Languages; little subject to change, both from the common genius of the East, and from the peculiar situation of a sequestered People. Of this Language, long since become a dead one, the only remains are in one small Volume; the contents of which, had not Providence been mercifully pleased to secure, while the Tongue was yet living, by a translation into Greek, the HEBREW VERITY, transmitted to us in the manner it was found in the most ancient MSS. where no vowel-points are used, nor space left to distinguish one word from another, and where a great number of terms occur only once, would at this day be a mere arbitrary CIPHER, which every Rabbinical or Cabalistic juggler might make the key of his unrevealed Mysteries.—"Idem accidit etiam Mahometanis (says Abraham Ekell.) ante inventa ab Ali Abnaditalebo puncta vocalia: Tanta enim legentium erat dissentio, ut nisi Othomanni coërcita fuisset authoritate, et determinata lectio punctis, quæ Ali excogitaverat, JAM DE ALCORANO ACTUM ESSET." And if this had been the case of the Arabic of the Alcoran, a copious and a living language, what had become of the Hebrew of the Bible? a very narrow and a dead one. Of which an ancient Jewish Grammarian gives this character: "Lingua ista [Arabica] elegans est, et longe lateque scriptis dilatata, et qui eam loquitur nulla dictione deficit: Lingua vero sancta pauca est præ illa, cum illius nihil extet nisi quod in Libris Scripturæ reperitur, *nec suppeditet omnes dictiones loquendi necessarias.*" Yet this is the language whose peculiarities

of

of style and composition, correspondent to every age and time, the *Professor* seems to think, may be as easily distinguished as those of the Greek or Latin Classics. So much for the Author of *The Divine Legation:* and indeed too much, had not Mr. LOCKE's defence been involved in his: that excellent person having declared (speaking of the words of Job, *that Idolatry was an iniquity to be punished by the Judge)* "THIS PLACE ALONE, WERE "THERE NO OTHER, is sufficient to confirm their opi-"nion who conclude that book to be writ by a JEW."

From *The Divine Legation,* the learned Professor turns again to the Examiner, who seems to sit heavy on his stomach.—This excellent Writer desired to know of the learned, *Where they could find a civil or religious Constitution out of Judea, which declared that the Children should suffer for the crime of their Parents.* To which the Professor replies in these very words—In præsens Horatiano illo versiculo contentus abito Examinatorum omnium CANDIDISSIMUS—*For the present, let this* MOST CANDID *of all Examiners go about his business, and be thankful for this scrap of Horace,*

"Delicta majorum immeritus lues,
"Romane." - - -

This is true Poetical payment: He is called upon for his reckoning, and he discharges it with an old Song. But the Examiner is not a man to take rhime for reason. He asked for an *old system of Laws*; and the contemptuous Professor gives him *an old Ballad:* But a little more civility at parting had not been amiss; for he, who did not spare the Bishop, would certainly demolish the Professor, should he take it into his head to examine the *Prælections* as he hath done the *Sermons.*

NOTES

APPERTAINING TO

THE FIFTH AND SIXTH SECTIONS

OF

BOOK VI.

P. 7. [A]

DR. STEBBING, in what he calls *Considerations on the command to offer up Isaac*, hath attempted to discredit the account here given of the *Command:* And previously assures his reader, that *if any thing can hinder the ill effects which my interpretation must have upon Religion, it must be his exposing the absurdity of the conceit.* This is confidently said. But what then? He can prove it. So it is to be hoped. If not - - - However, let us give him a fair hearing.—He criticises this observation on the word DAY, in the following manner: "Really, Sir, I see no manner of consequence in this "reasoning. That Christ's day had reference to his "office, as *Redeemer*, I grant. The day of Christ de- "notes the *time* when Christ should come, i. e. when "*He* should come, who was to be such by office and "employment. But why it must import also that when "Christ came he should be offered up a Sacrifice, I do "not in the least apprehend: Because I can very easily "understand that Abraham might have been informed "that Christ was to come, without being informed that he "was to lay down his life as a Sacrifice. If Abraham "saw that a time would come when one of his sons "should take away the curse, he saw Christ's day." [Consid. p. 139.] At first setting out (for I reckon for nothing this blundering, before he knew where he was,

into

into a *Socinian* comment, the thing he most abhors) the Reader sees he grants the point I contend for--*That Christ's* DAY (says he) *has reference to his office as Redeemer, I grant.* Yet the very next words employed to explain his meaning, contradict it;—*The Day of Christ denotes the* TIME *when Christ should come.* All the sense therefore, I can make of his concession, when joined to his explanation of it, amounts to this—*Christ's day has reference to his* OFFICE:—*No, not to his Office, but to his* TIME. He sets off well: but he improves as he goes along—*But why it must import* ALSO *that when Christ came he should be offered up as a Sacrifice, I do not in the least apprehend.* Nor I, neither, I assure him. Had I said, that the word *Day*, in the text, imported the *time*, I could as little apprehend as he does, how that which imports *time*, imports ALSO the *thing done in time.* Let him take this nonsense therefore to himself. I argued in a plain manner thus,—When the word *Day* is used to express, in general, the period of any one's existence, then it denotes *time*; when, to express his peculiar office and employment, then it denotes, *not the time*, but that circumstance of life characteristic of such office and employment; or the *things done in time.* DAY, in the text, is used to express Christ's peculiar office and employment. Therefore—But what follows is still better. His want of apprehension, it seems, is founded in this, *that he can easily understand, that Abraham might have been informed that Christ was to come; without being informed that he was to lay down his life as a Sacrifice.* Yes, and so could I likewise; or I had never been at the pains of making the criticism on the word *Day:* which takes its force from this very truth, that Abraham might have been informed of one without the other. And, therefore, to prove he was informed of that *other*, I produced the text in question, which afforded the occasion of the criticism. He goes on,—*If Abraham saw, that a time would come when one of his seed should take away the curse, he saw*

Christ's

Christ's DAY. Without doubt he did. Because it is agreed, that *Day* may signify either time, or circumstance of action. But what is this to the purpose? The question is not whether the word may not, when used indefinitely, signify *time*; but whether it signifies *time* in this text. I have shewn it does not. And what has been said to prove it does? Why that it may do so in another place. In a word, all he here says, proceeds on a total inapprehension of the drift and purpose of the argument.

P. 8. [B] *Daubuz* on the *Revelations*, p. 251; printed in the year 1720. To this reasoning, Dr. Stebbing replies as follows: "You are not more successful in your "next point, *Abraham rejoiced to see my Day, and he saw* "*it, and was glad,* ἵνα ΙΔΗ τὴν ἡμέραν τὴν ἐμὴν καὶ ΕΙΔΕ— "*This* (say you) *evidently shews it* [the revelation] *to* "*have been made by relation in words, but by representa-* "*tion in actions.*" How so? The reason follows. *The verb* "εἶδω *is frequently used in the New Testament in its* "*proper signification, to see sensibly.* —In the New Tes- "tament, do you say? Yes, Sir, and in every Greek "book you ever read in your life. What you SHOULD "have said is, that it is so used here; and I suppose you "would have said so, if you had known how to have "proved it." [Consid. pp. 139, 140.]

The reason follows (says he.) Where? In my book indeed, but not in his imperfect quotation from it; which breaks off before he comes to my reason. One who knew him not so well as I do, would suspect this was done to serve a purpose. No such matter; 'twas pure hap-hazard. He mistook the introduction of my argument for the argument itself. The argument itself, which he omits in the quotation, (and which was all I wanted, for the proof of my point,) was, *That the verb* εἶδω, *whether used literally or figuratively, always denotes a full intuition.* And this argument, I introduced in the following manner, *The verb* εἶδω *is frequently used in the*

New

New Testament in its proper signification, to see sensibly. Unluckily, as I say, he took this for the Argument itself, and thus corrects me for it: "What you SHOULD have "said, is, that it is so used here; and I suppose you "would have said so, if you had known how to have "proved it:" See, here, the true origin both of dogmatizing and divining! His *ignorance* of what I did say, leads him to tell me what I should have said, and to divine what I would have said. But, what I have said, I think I may stand to, *That the verb εἶδω always denotes a full intuition.* This was all I wanted from the text; and on this foundation, I proceeded in the sequel of the discourse, to prove that Abraham *saw sensibly.* Therefore, when my Examiner takes it (as he does) for granted, that because, in this place, I had not proved that the Word implied to *see sensibly*, I had not proved it at all; he is a second time mistaken.

"But, *he owns*, that, if this was all, perhaps *I should* "tell *him*, that it was a very strange answer of the *Jews*, "*thou art not yet fifty years old, and hast thou seen* "*Abraham?*" [Consid. p. 140.] He is very right. He might be sure I would. In answer therefore to this difficulty, he goes on and says, "No doubt, Sir, the "*Jews* answer our Saviour, as if he had said, that "*Abraham* and *he* were *cotemporaries*; in which, they "answered very foolishly, as they did on many other "occasions; and the answer will as little agree with your "interpretation as it does with mine. For does your "interpretation suppose that *Abraham* saw *Christ* in "person? No; you say it was by representation only." [Consid. pp. 140—1.]

The Jews answered our Saviour as if he had said that Abraham and he were cotemporaries.—Do they so? Why then, 'tis plain, *the expression was as strong in the Syrian language, used by Jesus, as in the Greek of his Historian*, which was all I aimed to prove by it. But *in this* (says he) *they answered very foolishly.* What then?

then? Did I quote them for their wisdom? A little common sense is all I want of those with whom I have to deal: and rarely as my fortune hath been to meet with it, yet it is plain these Jews did not want it. For the *folly* of their answer arises therefrom. They heard Jesus use a word in their vulgar idiom, which signified to see *corporeally*; and common sense led them to conclude that he used it in the vulgar meaning: in this they were not mistaken. But, from thence, they inferred, that he meant it in the sense of *seeing personally*; and in this, they were. And now let the Reader judge whether the *folly* of their answer shews the *folly* of my Argument, or of my Examiner's.—Nay further, he tells us, they answered *as foolishly on many other occasions.* They did so; and I will remind him of one. Jesus says to Nicodemus, *Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God* *, &c. Suppose now, from these words, I should attempt to prove that *Regeneration* and divine *Grace* were realities, and not mere metaphors: for that Jesus, in declaring the necessity of them, used such strong expressions that Nicodemus understood him to mean the being physically *born again, and entering the second time into the womb:* would it be sufficient, let me ask my Examiner, to reply in this manner: "No doubt, Sir, "Nicodemus answered our Saviour as if he had said, that "a follower of the Gospel must *enter a second time into* "*his mother's womb and be born:* in which he answered "very foolishly; and the answer will as little agree with "your interpretation as it does with mine. For does "your interpretation suppose he should so enter? No; "but that he *should be born of water and of the* "*Spirit.*"—Would this, I say, be deemed, even by our Examiner himself, a sufficient answer? When he has resolved me this, I shall, perhaps, have something farther to say to him. In the mean time I go on. And, in returning him his last words restored to their subject, help

* St. John iii. 3.

him

him forward in the solution of what I expect from him.—*The answer* (says he) *will as little agree with your interpretation as it does with mine. For does your interpretation suppose that Abraham saw Christ in person? No; you say, it was by representation only.* Very well. Let me ask then, in the first place, Whether he supposes that what I said on this occasion was to prove that Abraham saw Christ from the reverend authority of his Jewish Adversaries: or to prove that the verb εἶδω signified to *see literally*, from their mistaken answer? He thought me here, it seems, in the way of those writers, who are quoting *Authorities*, when they should be giving *Reasons*. Hence, he calls the answer the Jews here gave, a *foolish one*: as if I had undertaken for its orthodoxy. But our Examiner is still farther mistaken. The point I was upon, in support of which I urged the answer of the Jews, was not the seeing *this*, or *that person*: but the seeing *corporeally*, and not *mentally*. Now, if the Jews understood Jesus, as saying that Abraham saw *corporeally*, I concluded, that the expression, used by Jesus, had that import: and this was all I was concerned to prove. Difference, therefore, between their answer as I quoted it, and my interpretation, there was none. Their answer implied that Abraham was said to see *corporeally*; and my interpretation supposes that the words employed had that import. But to make a distinction where there was no difference, *seeing in person, and seeing by representation*, are brought in, to a question where they have nothing to do.

P. 13. [C] Ver. 10. et seq. By the account here given, of GOD's Dispensations to Abraham, may be seen the folly of that objection, brought with such insinuations of importance, against the divine appointment of *Circumcision*, from the *time* of its institution. Sir John Marsham observes, that *Abraham, when he went into Egypt, was not circumcised, nor for twenty years after his return.* Abramus, quando Ægyptum ingressus est, nondum circumcisus

circumcisus erat, neque per annos amplius viginti postreditum, p. 73. Franeq. ed. 4to. And further, *that Circumcision was a most ancient rite amongst the Egyptians, that they had it from the beginning, and that it was a principle with them not to make use of the customs of other people.* Apud Ægyptios circumcidendi ritus vetustissimus fuit, et ἀπ' ἀρχῆς institutis. Illi nullorum aliorum hominum institutis uti volunt, p. 74.—The noble Author of the CHARACTERISTICS, who never loses an opportunity of expressing his good-will to a *Prophet* or a *Patriarch*, takes up this pitiful suspicion after Marsham: "Before the time that Israel was constrained to go "down to Egypt, and *sue for maintenance*,—the *Holy* "*Patriarch Abraham* himself had been necessitated to "this compliance on the same account.—'Tis certain "that if this *Holy Patriarch*, who first instituted the "sacred rite of Circumcision within his own family or "tribe, had no regard to any Policy or Religion of the "*Egyptians*, yet he had formerly been a Guest and "Inhabitant of *Egypt* (where historians mention this to "have been a national rite) long ere he had received any "divine notice or Revelation concerning this affair.", Vol. iii. pp. 52, 53. These great men, we see, appeal to *Scripture*, for the support of their insinuation; which *Scripture* had they but considered with common attention, they might have found, that it gives us a chronological account of GOD's gradual Revelations to the *Holy Patriarch*; and therefore that, according to the order GOD was pleased to observe in his several Dispensations towards him, the Rite of Circumcision could not have been enjoined *before* the time Abraham happened to go into *Egypt*; nor, indeed, at any other time than that in which we find it to be given; consequently that his journey into *Egypt* had not the least concern or connexion with this affair: nay, had these learned Critics but attended to their own observation, that the Rite of Circumcision was instituted twenty years after Abraham's

return from *Egypt*, they must have seen the weakness of so partial a suspicion. For had this been after the model of an *Egyptian* rite, Abraham, in all likelihood, had been circumcised in *Egypt*, or at least very soon after his return: for in *Egypt*, it was a *personal*, not a *family* Rite. And we learn from profane history, that those who went from other Countries to *Egypt*, with a design to copy their manners, or to be initiated into their Wisdom, were, as a previous ceremony, commonly circumcised by the Egyptian Priests themselves.

P. 16. [D]. To this Dr. Stebbing answers, "You lay "it down here as the common interpretation, that the "command to Abraham to offer up his son was given "as a *trial only*; WHICH IS NOT TRUE." Why not? because "the common opinion is, that God's intention "in this command was not only to TRY Abraham, but "also to PREFIGURE the sacrifice of Christ." [Consid. p. 150.] Excellent! I speak of the Command's being given: but to whom? To all the Faithful, for whose sake it was recorded? or to Abraham only, for whose sake it was revealed? Does not the very subject confine my meaning to this latter sense? Now, to Abraham, I say, (according to the common opinion) it was given as a Trial only. To the faithful, if you will, as a prefiguration.—If, to extricate himself from this blunder or sophism, call it which you will, he will say it prefigured to Abraham likewise; he then gives up all he has been contending for; and establishes my interpretation, which is, that Abraham knew this to be a representation of the great sacrifice of Christ: I leave it undetermined whether he mistakes or cavils: See now, if he be not obliged to me. Where I speak of the common opinion, I say, *the command is supposed to be* GIVEN *as a Trial only*. He thinks fit to tell me, *I say not true*. But when he comes to prove it, he changes the terms of the question thus; "For the common opinion is, that GOD'S INTENTION

" in this command was," &c. Now God's intention of *giving* a command to Abraham, for Abraham's sake, might be one thing; and God's general intention of *giving* that Command, as it concerned the whole of his Dispensation, another. But to prove further that I *said not true*, when I said that, according to the common interpretation, the Command was given for a Trial only; he observes, that I myself had owned that the resemblance to Christ's sacrifice was so strong, that Interpreters could never overlook it. What then? If the Interpreters, who lived *after* Christ, could not overlook it, does it follow that Abraham, who lived *before*, could not overlook it neither? But the impertinence of this has been shewn already. Nor does the learned *Considerer* appear to be unconscious of it. Therefore, instead of attempting to inforce it to the purpose for which *he quotes it*, he turns, all on a sudden, to shew that it makes nothing to the purpose for which *I employed it*. But let us follow this Protean Sophister through all his windings.—" The " resemblance (says he) no doubt, is very strong; but " how this corroborates your sense of the command, I do " not see. Your sense is, that it was an actual infor- " mation given to Abraham, of the sacrifice of Christ. " But to *prefigure*, and to *inform*, are different things. " This transaction might prefigure, and does prefigure the " sacrifice of Christ; whether Abraham knew any thing of " the sacrifice of Christ or no. For it does not follow, " that, because a thing is prefigured, therefore it must be " seen and understood, at the time when it is prefigured." [*Consid.* pp. 150, 151.] Could it be believed that these words should immediately follow an argument, whose force (the little it has) is founded on the principle, *That to* PREFIGURE *and to* INFORM *are* NOT *different things?*

P. 17. [E]. To this reasoning, Dr. Stebbing replies, " But how can you prove that, according to the common " interpretation, there was no reward subsequent to the

"a trial?" [*Consid.* p. 151.] How shall I be able to please him?—Before, he was offended that I thought the Author of the book of Genesis might omit relating the *mode* of a fact, when he had good reason so to do. Here, where I suppose *no fact*, because there was none recorded when no reason hindered; he is as captious on this side likewise. "How will you prove it?" (says he). From the silence of the Historian (say I) when nothing hindered him from speaking. Well, but he will shew it to be fairly recorded in Scripture, that there were rewards subsequent to the trial. This, indeed, is to the purpose: "Abraham (says he) lived a great many years after that "transaction happened. He lived to dispose of his son "Isaac in marriage, and to see his seed. He lived to "be married himself to another Wife, and to have "several children by her: He had not THEN received "all God's mercies, nor were all God's dispensations "towards him at an end; and it is to be remembered "that it is expressly said of Abraham, Gen. xxiv. 1. "(a long time after the transaction in question), *that* "*God had blessed him in all things.*" [*Consid.* p. 151, 2.] The question here is of the extraordinary and peculiar rewards bestowed by God on Abraham; and he decides upon it, by an enumeration of the ordinary and common. And, to fill up the measure of these blessings, he makes the burying of his first wife and the marrying of a second to be one. Though unluckily, this second proves at last to be a Concubine; as appears plainly from the place where she is mentioned. But let me ask him seriously; Could he, indeed, suppose me to mean (though he attended not to the drift of the argument) that God immediately withdrew all the common blessings of his Providence from the Father of the Faithful, after the last extraordinary reward bestowed upon him, when he lived many years after? I can hardly, I own, account for this perversity, any otherwise than from a certain temper of mind which I am not at present disposed to give a name

to:

to: but which, the habit of *Answering* has made so common, that nobody either mistakes it, or is now indeed much scandalized at it. Though for my part, I should esteem a total ignorance of letters a much happier lot than such a learned depravity.—"But this is not all," (says he)—No, is it not? I am sorry for it!—"What "surprises me most is, that you should argue so WEAKLY, "as if the reward of good men had respect to this life "only. Be it, that Abraham had received all God's "mercies; and that all God's dispensations towards "him, in this world, were at an end; was there not a "life yet to come, with respect to which the whole "period of our existence here is to be considered as a "state of trial; and where we are all of us to look for "that reward of our virtues which we very often fail "of in this?" [*Consid.* p. 152.] Well, if it was *not all*, we find, at least, it is all of a piece. For, as before, he would sophistically obtrude upon us *common* for *extraordinary* REWARDS; so here (true to the mystery of his trade) he puts *common* for *extraordinary* TRIALS: *Our present existence* (says he) *is to be considered as a state of Trial.* The case, to which I applied my argument, was this;—"God, determining to select a chosen People from the loins of Abraham, would manifest to the world that this Patriarch was worthy of the distinction shewn unto him, by having his faith found superior to the hardest trials." Now, in speaking of these trials, I said, that the command to offer Isaac was the last. *No* (says the Examiner) *that cannot be, for, with respect to a life to come, the whole period of our existence here, is to be considered as a state of* TRIAL." And so again (says he) with regard to the REWARD; which you pretend, in the order of God's Dispensation, should follow the trial; Why, we are to *look for it in another world.*—Holy Scripture records the history of one, to whom God only promised (in the clear and obvious sense) *temporal* blessings. It tells us, that these temporal blessings were dispensed.

One species of which were extraordinary Rewards after extraordinary Trials. In the most extraordinary of all, no Reward followed: This was my difficulty. See here, how he has cleared it up. Hardly indeed to his own satisfaction: for he tries to save all by another fetch; the weakest men being ever most fruitful in expedients, as the slowest animals have commonly the most feet. "And what (says he) if after all this, the wisdom of "God should have thought fit, that this very man, whom "he had singled out to be an eminent example of piety "to all generations; should, at the very close of his life, "give evidence of it, by an instance that exceeded all "that had gone before; that he might be a pattern of "patient suffering even unto the end? Would there not "be SENSE in such a supposition?" [*Consid.* p. 153.] In truth, I doubt not, as he hath put it: And I will tell him; Why. Abraham was not a mere instrument to stand for an example only; but a moral Agent likewise; and to be dealt with as such. Now, though, as he stands for an *Example*, we may admit of as many *Trials of patient suffering* as this good-natured Divine thinks fitting to impose; yet, as a *moral Agent*, it is required, (if we can conclude any thing from the method of God's dealing with his Servants, recorded in sacred history) that each Trial be attended with some work done, or some reward conferred. But these two parts in Abraham's character, our *Considerer* perpetually confounds. He supposes nothing to be done for Abraham's own sake; but every thing for the Example's sake. Yet, did the good old cause of *Answering* require, he could as easily suppose the contrary. And to shew I do him no wrong, I will here give the Reader an instance of his dexterity, in the counter-exercise of his arms. In p. 150. of these *Considerations* (he says) "IT DOES NOT FOLLOW, "that, because a thing is prefigured, therefore it must "be seen and understood AT THE TIME when it is "prefigured." Yet in the body of the Pamphlet, at

pp. 112,

pp. 112, 113, having another point to puzzle; he says (on my observing that a future State and Resurrection were not national Doctrines till the time of the Maccabees) "he knows I will say they had these doctrines from the "Prophets—yet the Prophets were dead two hundred "years before."—But if the Prophets were dead, their Writings were extant—"And what then? Is it LIKELY "that the sons should have learnt from the dead Pro-"phets what the Fathers could not learn from the "living?—Why could not the Jews learn this Doctrine "from THE VERY FIRST, as well as their Posterity at "the distance of ages afterwards?" In the first case we find he expressly says, it *does not* follow; in the second, he as plainly supposes, that it *does*.

P. 19. [F]. And yet an ingenious man, one M. Bouiller, in a late Latin Dissertation, accuses me of concealing, that Chrysostom, Erasmus, and others, were of *my opinion*, viz. that Abraham in the Command to sacrifice his Son was informed, of what he earnestly desired to know, that the redemption of Mankind was to be obtained by the sacrifice of the Son of God. The Reader now sees, whether the Author of the Divine Legation was guilty of a concealed theft, or his Accuser of an open blunder, under which he covers his orthodoxal malignity. Yet he thinks he atones for all, by calling *The Divine Legation egregium opus: ubi ingenium acerrimum cum eximia eruditione certat.*—Dissertationum Sacrum Sylloge, p. 194.

P. 20. [G]. To this, the great Professor replies, That "there are but few gestures of the body more apt *of* "*themselves* to signify the sentiment of the mind than "articulate sound: The force of which arises not from "the nature of things; but from the arbitrary will of "man: and common use and custom imposes this "signification on articulate sounds, not on motions and "gestures—Pauci sunt motus corporis, qui ipsi per se "aptiores esse videntur ad motus animi significandos,

"quam sonus, qui ore et lingua in vocem formatur. "Vis ipsa non est in natura rerum posita, sed arbitrio "hominum constituta; eamque mos et usus communis "non gestibus corporis tribuit, sed verbis et voci." RUTHERFORTH, *Determ.*

The purpose of this fine observation, though so cloudily expressed, is to shew that *motion and gesture* can have no signification at all: Not from *nature*, since few gestures of the body are more apt of themselves to express the mind than articulate sound; and yet articulate sound is of arbitrary signification: Not from *institution*, since it is not to gesture, but to articulate sound, that men have agreed to affix a meaning. The consequence is, that *gesture can have no meaning at all*; and so there is an end of all Abraham's SIGNIFICATIVE ACTION. The Divine would make a great figure, were it not for his Bible; but the Bible is perpetually disorienting the Philosopher. His general Thesis is, "That *actions* can never become significative but by the aid of *words*." Now I desire to know what he thinks of all the TYPICAL Rites of the *Law*, significative of the Sacrifice of Christ? Were not these *Actions?* Had they no meaning which extended to the *Gospel?* or were there any *Words* to accompany them, which explained that meaning? Yet has this man asserted, in what he calls a *Determination*, that in the instances of expressive gesture, recorded in Scripture, *words were always used in conjunction with them.* But to come a little closer to him. As a Philosopher he should have given his Reasons for those two assertions; or as an Historian he should have verified his Facts. He hath attempted neither; and I commend his prudence; for both are against him: His Fact, that gestures have no meaning by *nature*, is false: and his Reasoning, that they have none by *institution*, is mistaken. The Spartans might instruct him that *gestures alone have a natural meaning*. That sage People (as we are told by Herodotus) were so persuaded

of

of this truth, that they preferred converse by *action*, to converse by *speech*; as action had all the clearness of speech, and was free from the abuses of it. This Historian, in his Thalia, informs us, that when the Samians sent to Lacedemon for succours in distress, their Orators made a long and laboured speech. When it was ended, the Spartans told them, that *the first part of it they had forgotten, and could not comprehend the latter.* Whereupon the Samian Orators produced their empty Bread-baskets, and *said*, they wanted bread. *What need of words*, replied the Spartans, *do not your empty Bread-baskets sufficiently declare your meaning?* Thus we see the Spartans thought not only that *gestures were apt of themselves* (or by nature) *to signify the sentiment of the mind*, but even *more apt than articulate sounds.* Their relations, the Jews, were in the same sentiments and practice; and full as sparing of their words; and (the two languages considered) for something a better reason. The sacred Historian, speaking of public days of humiliation, tells his story in this manner—*And they gathered together to Mizpeh*, AND DREW WATER AND POURED IT OUT BEFORE THE LORD, *and fasted on that day*, 1. Sam. chap. vii. ver. 6. The Historian does not explain in *words* the meaning of this *drawing of water*, &c. nor needed he. It sufficiently expressed, that *a deluge of tears was due for their offences.* The Professor, perhaps, will say that words accompanied the action, at least preceded it. But what will he say to the action of Tarquin, when he struck off the heads of the higher poppies which overtopped their fellows? Here we are expressly told, that all was done in profound silence, and yet the action was well understood. But further, I will tell our Professor what he least suspected, that Gestures, besides their *natural*, have often an *arbitrary* signification. "A certain Asiatic Prince, entertained at Rome by Augustus, was, amongst other Shows and Festivities, amused with a famous Pantomime; whose

actions

actions were so expressive, that the Barbarian begged him of the Emperor for his Interpreter between him and several neighbouring Nations, whose languages were unknown to one another." Pantomimic gesture was amongst the Romans one way of exhibiting a Dramatic Story. But before such gestures could be formed into a continued series of Information, we cannot but suppose much previous pains and habit of invention to be exerted by the Actors. Amongst which, one expedient must needs be (in order to make the expression of the Actors convey an entire connected sense) to intermix with the gestures *naturally* significative, gestures made significative by *institution*; that is, brought, by *arbitrary* use, to have as determined a meaning as the others.

To illustrate this by that more lasting information, the *Hieroglyphics* of the Egyptians, and the *real Characters* of the Chinese; which, as we have shewn, run parallel with the more fleeting conveyance of expressive gesture, just as alphabetic writing does with speech. Now, though the earlier Hieroglyphics were composed almost altogether of marks *naturally* significative, yet when the Egyptians came to convey continued and more precise discourses by this mode of writing, they found a necessity of inventing arbitrary significations, to intermix and connect with the other marks which had a *natural*. [See vol. iv. p. 125.]

Now, to shew that these arbitrary Hieroglyphic marks were real Characters like the other, let us turn to the Characters of the Chinese, which though (in their present way of use) most of them be of *arbitrary* signification, yet the Missionaries assure us that they are understood by all the neighbouring nations of different languages. This shews that the Augustan Pantomime, so coveted by the Barbarian for his interpreter, might be very able to discharge his function, though several of his gestures had an arbitrary signification. And we easily conceive how it might come to pass, since the gesture of *arbitrary* signification only served to connect the active discourse, by

standing

standing between others of a *natural* signification, directing to their sense.

Thus (to conclude with our Determiner) it appears that GESTURES ALONE are so far from having no meaning at all, as he has ventured to affirm, that they have all the meaning which human expression can possibly convey: all which is properly their own, namely, *natural* information; and even much of that which is more peculiar to speech, namely, *arbitrary*.

To illustrate the whole by a domestic instance; the solemn gesture of a Professor in his Chair; which sometimes may *naturally* happen, to signify Folly; though, by *institution*, it always signifies Wisdom; and yet again, it must be owned, in justice to our Professor's scheme, that sometimes it means nothing at all.

P. 24. [H]. Would the reader now believe it possible, when these words lay before Dr. Stebbing, while he was answering my Book, that he should venture to ask me, or be capable of asking these insulting questions—*Was there any good use that Abraham could make of this knowledge which the rest of the People of God might not have made of it as well as He? Or if it was not unfit for every body else, was it not unfit for Abraham too?*

P. 25. [I]. But all I can say, or all an Apostle can say, if I chance to say it after him, will not satisfy Dr. Stebbing. He yet sticks to his point, "That if any "information of the death and sacrifice of Christ had "been intended, it is NATURAL TO THINK that the ex-"planation would have been Recorded with the trans-"action, as it is in all other SUCH LIKE CASES." Now if this orthodox Gentleman will shew me *a such like case*, i. e. a case where a Revelation of the Gospel Dispensation is made by an expressive action, and the explanation is recorded along with it, I shall be ready to confess, he has made a pertinent objection. In the meantime, I have something more to say to him. He supposes, that this commanded

commanded Sacrifice of Isaac was a TYPE of the Sacrifice of Christ. To this a Deist replies, in the Doctor's own words, "If any type had been here intended, it is "natural to think that the explanation would have been "recorded with the transaction." Now when the Doctor has satisfied the objection, which he has lent the Deists, against a TYPE, I suppose it may serve to satisfy himself, when he urges it against my idea of the Command, as an INFORMATION BY ACTION. Again, our Answerer himself affirms that the doctrine of Redemption was delivered under *Types* in the Law; and that the doctrine thus delivered was designedly secreted and concealed from the ancient Jews. Now is it *natural to think* (to use his own words) that Moses would openly and plainly record a Doctrine in one book which he had determined to secrete in another, when both were for the use of the same People and the same Age?

P. 25. [K]. "You must give me leave to observe "(says Dr. Stebbing) that the transaction in question "will have the same efficacy to shew *the dependency* "*between the two dispensations*, whether Abraham had "thereby any information of the Sacrifice of Christ or "not." [Consid. p. 156.] This, indeed, is saying something. And, could he prove what he says, it would be depriving my interpretation of one of its principal advantages. Let us see then how he goes about it,—"for "this does not arise from Abraham's KNOWLEDGE, or "any body's KNOWLEDGE, at the time when the transaction happened, but from the similitude and correspondency between the event and the transaction, by "which it was prefigured; which is exactly the same "upon either supposition." [Ibid. pp. 156, 7.] To this I reply, 1. That I never supposed that the dependency between the two Dispensations did *arise from Abraham's knowledge, or any body's knowledge*, at that, or at any other time; but from God's INTENTION that this commanded

manded action should import or represent the Sacrifice of Christ: and then indeed comes in the question, Whether that *Intention* be best discovered from God's *declaration* of it to Abraham, or from a *similitude and correspondency* between this commanded action and the Sacrifice of Christ. Therefore, 2. I make bold to tell him, that a *similitude and correspondency between the event and the transaction which prefigured it*, IS NOT ENOUGH to shew this *dependency*, to the satisfaction of Unbelievers; who say, that a likeness between two things of the same nature, such as offering up two men to death, in different ways, and transacted in two distant periods, is not sufficient alone to shew that they had any relation to one another. With the same reason, they will say, we might pretend that Jephtha's daughter, or the king of Moab's son whom the father sacrificed on the wall, 2 Kings iii. 27. were the types of Christ's sacrifice. Give us, they exult, a proof from Scripture that God declared or revealed his INTENTION of prefiguring the death of Jesus; or some better authority at least than a modern Typifier, who deals only in *similitudes* and *correspondences*, and has all the wildness, without the wit, of a Poet, and all the weakness, without the ingenuity, of an Analogist! Now whether it be our Examiner, or the Author of the *Divine Legation*, who has given them this satisfaction, or whether they have any reason to require it of either of us, is left to the impartial Reader to consider.

P. 27. [L]. Let us see now what Dr. Stebbing has to say to this reasoning.—"By your leave, Sir," says he, (which, by the way, he never asks, but to abuse me; nor ever takes, but to misrepresent me) "if the Apostle had "meant by this expression, to signify that Isaac stood as "the Representative of Christ, and that his being taken "from the mount alive, was the figure of Christ's Re-"surrection; it SHOULD have been said, that Abraham "received CHRIST from the dead in a figure." *Should* it

it so? What? where the discourse was not concerning *Christ*, but *Isaac?* Had, indeed, the sacred Writer been speaking of Abraham's *knowledge of Christ*, something might have been said; but he is speaking of a very different thing, his *faith in God*; and only intimates, by a strong expression, what he understood that action to be, which he gives, as an instance of the most illustrious act of *faith*. I say, had this been the case, something might have been said; something, I mean, just to keep him in countenance; yet still, nothing to the purpose, as I shall now shew. The transaction of the Sacrifice of Christ related to GOD. The *figure* of that transaction, in the command to offer Isaac, related (according to my interpretation) to ABRAHAM. Now, it was God who received Christ; as it was Abraham who received the type or figure of Christ, in Isaac. To tell us then, that (according to my interpretation) it SHOULD *have been said, that Abraham received* CHRIST *from the dead in a figure*, is, in effect, telling us that he knows no more of logical expression than of theological reasoning. It is true, could he shew the expression improper, in the sense which I give to the transaction, he would then speak a little to the purpose; and this, to do him justice, is what he would fain be at.—"For, Christ it was, according to your interpretation (says he) that was received from the dead in a figure, by Isaac his Representative, who really came alive from the mount. If the reading had been, not ἐν παραβολῇ, but εἰς παραβολὴν, it would have suited your notion; for it might properly have been said, that Isaac came alive from the mount *as* a figure, or *that he might be* a figure of the Resurrection of Christ." [Consid. p. 147.] Miserable chicane! As, on the one hand, I might say with propriety, that CHRIST *was received from the dead in a figure*, i. e. BY a representative: so on the other, I might say that ISAAC *was received from the dead in a figure*, i. e. AS a representative; For Isaac sustaining the person of Christ, who

was

was raised from the dead, might *in a figure*, i. e. as that person, be said to be received: yet this our Examiner denies, and tells us, the Apostle SHOULD *have said that Abraham received* CHRIST, and not ISAAC.—" But " (adds he) if the reading had been not ἐν Παραβολῇ, but " εἰς Παραβολήν, it would have suited your notion." And the reason he gives is this: " For it might properly have " been said that Isaac came alive from the mount AS A " figure, or THAT HE MIGHT BE a figure of the resur- " rection of Christ." Strange! He says, this would have suited *my* notion; and the reason he gives, shews it suits only *his own*; which is, that the exactness of the resemblance between the two actions, not the declaration of the Giver of the Command, made it a figure. This is the more extraordinary, as I myself have here shewn that the old Latin translator had turned the words into IN PARABOLAM instead of IN PARABOLA, for this very reason, because he understood the command in the sense our Examiner contends for; viz. That Isaac, by the *resemblance* of the actions, MIGHT BE, or might become a figure.

However, he owns at last that " a reason will still be " wanting, why, instead of speaking the fact as it really " was, that Isaac came alive from the mount; the " Apostle chose rather to say (what was not really the " case) that Abraham received him *from the dead*." [Consid. pp. 147, 8.] Well; and have not I given a reason? No matter for that: Dr. Stebbing is turned *Examiner*, and has engrossed the market. His reason follows thus, " If Isaac did not die (as it is certain he " did not) Abraham could not receive him from the dead. " And yet the Apostle says, he received him *from the* " *dead*. The clearing up this difficulty will shew the true " sense of the passage." [Consid. pp. 147, 148.] What, will the clearing up a difficulty of his own making discover the true sense of another man's writing? This is one of his new improvements in Logic; in which, as in Arithmetic,

Arithmetic, he has invented a *rule of false*, to discover an unknown truth. For there is none of this difficulty in the sacred Text; it is not there (as in our Examiner) said simply, that *Abraham received Isaac from the dead*, but that he *received him from the dead* IN A FIGURE, or under the assumed personage of *Christ*. Now if *Christ* died, then he, who assumed his personage, in order to represent his passion and resurrection, might surely be said to be *received from the dead in a figure*. A wonderful *difficulty* truly! and we shall see, as wonderfully solved;—by a conundrum! But with propriety enough. For as a real difficulty requires sense and criticism to resolve it, an imaginary one may be well enough managed by a quibble.—Because the translators of St. Mark's Gospel have rendered ἐν ποίᾳ παραβολῇ by, *with what comparison shall we compare it*, therefore, ἐν παραβολῇ, in the text in question, signifies COMPARATIVELY SPEAKING. But no words can shew him like his own—"The Apostle does not say *simply and absolutely*, that "Abraham received Isaac from the dead; but that he "received him from the dead ἐν παραβολῇ, *in a parable*." See here now! Did not I tell you so? There was no difficulty all this while: The sentence only opened to the right and left to let in a blustering objection, which is no sooner evaporated than it closes again as before. *It was not simply said*—No: "But that he received him—ἐν "παραβολῇ *in a parable*, i. e. *in a comparison*, or *by com-*"*parison*. Thus the word is used, Mark iv. 30. *Where-*"*unto shall we liken the kingdom of God, or with what* "COMPARISON [ἐν ποίᾳ παραβολῇ] *shall we compare it*. "The meaning then may be, that Abraham's receiving "Isaac alive (after his death was denounced) by the re-"vocation of the command; was AS IF HE HAD re-"ceived him from the dead. Thus several Interpreters "understand the place. Or it may be, as others will have "it, that the Apostle here refers to the birth of Isaac; "which was [ἐν παραβολῇ] COMPARATIVELY SPEAKING, a receiving

" a receiving him from the dead; his father being old,
" and his mother past the age of child-bearing, on which
" account the Apostle styles them both *dead*. Which in-
" terpretation, I the rather approve, because it suggests
" the proper grounds of Abraham's faith." [Consid. pp. 148, 149.]

He says, ἐν παραβολῇ signifies *in or by comparison*; and that the word is so used in St. Mark; to prove which, he quotes the English translation. Now I must take the liberty to tell him, that the translators were mistaken; and he with them. Παραβολῇ, in St. Mark, is not used in the sense of a *similitude* or *comparison*, but of a *parable*. The ancients had two ways of illustrating the things they inforced; the one was by a *parable*, the other by a simple *comparison* or *simile*: how the latter of these arose out of the former I have shewn in the fourth Volume. Here, both these modes of illustration are referred to; which should have been translated thus, *To what shall we* COMPARE *the kingdom of God, or with what* PARABLE *shall we illustrate or parabolize it.*—ὁμοιώσωμεν—παραβάλωμεν—which words express two different and well-known modes of illustration.

But now suppose ἐν ποίᾳ παραβολῇ had signified *with what comparison:* How comes it to pass that ἐν παραβολῇ should signify *by comparison*, or *as it were*, or COMPARATIVELY SPEAKING? In plain truth, his critical analogy has ended in a pleasant blunder. How so? you will ask. Nay, 'tis true there's no denying, but that *speaking by comparison* is *comparatively speaking*; and, if men will put another sense upon it, who can help that? they say, *comparatively speaking* signifies the speaking loosely, inaccurately, and incorrectly. But was it for our Doctor to put his reader in mind of such kind of speakers? But the charge of a blunder, an innocent mishap, I am ready to retract; for I observe him to go into it with much artful preparation; a circumstance which by no means marks that genuine turn of mind,

which is quick and sudden, and over head and ears, in an instant: He begins with explaining,—*in a comparison*, by—*by comparison:* where you just get the first glimpse, as it were, of an enascent equivocation; and his *by comparison* is presently afterwards turned into *as it were*, or *as if he had*; and then, *comparatively speaking* brings up the rear, and closes the criticism three deep.

P. 29. [M]. Dr. Stebbing goes on as usual—"In "short, Sir, I do not understand this Doctrine (with "which your whole Work much abounds) of revealing "things clearly to Patriarchs, and Prophets, and Leaders, "as a special favour to themselves; but to be kept as a "secret from the rest of Mankind."—It is but too plain *he does not understand it:* for which I can give no better reason than that it is the Scripture-doctrine, and not the doctrine of Sums and Systems. "I have been *used* (says "he) to consider persons under this character, as ap-"pointed, not for themselves, but for others; and therefore "to conclude that WHATEVER was clearly revealed to "them, concerning God's Dispensations, was so revealed "in order to be communicated to others*." This is the old sophism; "That, because Persons act and are employed for others; therefore, they do nothing, and have nothing done for themselves." When God said, *Shall I hide from Abraham that thing which I do?* was not this said to, and for himself?—But he has another to match it, "That whatever was clearly revealed *to the Prophets*, was so revealed, in order to be communicated to others." Here, then, a little Scripture-doctrine will do him no harm. Did Moses communicate all he knew to the Jews, concerning the *Christian Dispensation*; which the Author of the Epistle to the Hebrews tells us was clearly revealed to him in the mount?—*Priests* (says he) *that offer gifts according to the Law, who serve unto the example and shadow of heavenly things, as Moses was admonished of God when he was about to make the Taber-*

* Consid. pp. 155, 156. *nacle.*

*nacle**. Again, We find that Ezekiel, on his being called out, upon his mission, saw (what the author of Ecclesiasticus calls) *the glorious vision*; and had (as appears from the allegory of the roll of a book) a full interpretation thereof. Yet, notwithstanding all his illumination, he was directed by God to speak so obscurely to the People, that he found cause to complain,—*Ah, Lord, they say of me, Doth he not speak parables*†*?* And now let him ask the Prophets in the same magisterial language he is accustomed to examine me, *Was there any good use you could make of your knowledge, that the People of God might not have made of it as well as you?*—But this very Dispensation is alluded to, and continued, under the kingdom of Christ. *And his Disciples asked him saying, What might this parable be?* And he said, *Unto you it is given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of God: But to others, in parables; that seeing they might not see, and hearing they might not understand*‡. Again, St. John in his visions tells us,—*And when the seven thunders had uttered their voices, I was about to write. And I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me,* SEAL UP *those things which the seven thunders uttered, and* WRITE THEM NOT. Rev. x. 4. And now, Reader, I shall try his gratitude!—"If you can shew, *(says he)* "that I am mistaken in this, pray do it, and I shall be "obliged to you." p. 156. You see, I have taken him at his word. And it was well I did; for it was no sooner out of his mouth, than, as if he had repented, not of his candour, but his confidence, he immediately cries, Hold—and tells me, "I might have spared myself in asking "another question, *Why, if Revelations cannot be clearly "recorded, are they recorded at all?*" p. 156. But, great *Defender of the Faith!*—of the ancient Jewish Church, I mean, I asked that question, because the answer to it shews how much you are mistaken; as the intelligent Reader, by this time, easily perceives. But why does he

* Heb. viii. 4, 5. † Ezek. xx. 49. ‡ Luke viii. 9, 10

say I might have *spared that question?*—Because "if a "Revelation is not clearly given, it cannot be clearly "recorded." p. 156. Did I say it could? Or will he say, that there are no reasons why a Revelation, that is clearly given, should be obscurely recorded? To what purpose, then, was the observation made? Made? why to introduce another: for, with our equivocal Examiner, the corruption of argument is the generation of cavil.—"And yet *(says he)* as YOU INTIMATE, there may be "reasons why an OBSCURE REVELATION should be "recorded, to wit, for the instruction of future ages, "when, the obscurity being cleared up by the event, "it shall appear, that it was foreseen and fore-ordained "in the knowledge and appointment of God." p. 156. If thou wilt believe me, Reader, I never *intimated* any thing so absurd.

What I *intimated* was not concerning an *obscure Revelation*, but a *Revelation obscurely recorded*. These are very different things, as appears from hence, that the latter may be a *clear Revelation*; the word being relative to him to whom the Revelation was made. But this is a peccadillo only. However he approves the reason of *recording*: for that, thereby, "it shall appear, that IT was foreseen and fore-ordained by God." IT,—What? The *obscure Revelation*, according to grammatical construction: but, in his English, I suppose, IT stands for the *fact revealed*. Well then; from the recording of an obscure revelation, he says it will appear, when the foretold fact happens, that it was foreseen and pre-ordained by God. This too he tells the Reader I *intimated*; but sure, the Reader can never think me so silly: For every fact, whether prefigured and foretold, or not prefigured and foretold, must needs have been foreseen and pre-ordained by God. Now, whether we are to ascribe this to exactness, or to inaccuracy, of expression, is hard to say. For I find him a great master in that species of composition which a celebrated French Writer, in his

encomium

encomium on the *Revelation*, calls, *en clarté noire*. However, think what we will of his head, his heart lies too open to be misjudged of.

P. 30. [N]. This infidel objection, the Reader sees, consists of two parts: the one, that Abraham must needs doubt of the Author of the Command: the other, that he would be misled, by conceiving amiss of his Attributes, to believe *human sacrifices* were grateful to him. Dr. Stebbing, who will leave nothing *unanswered*, will needs answer this, [Consid. pp. 158, 160.] To the first part he replies, partly by the assistance I myself had given him, (where I took notice of what might be urged by Believers, as of *great weight and validity*) and partly from what he had picked up elsewhere. But here I shall avoid imitating his example, who, in spite to the Author of Arguments professedly brought in support of Religion, strives, with all his might, to shew their invalidity; an employment, one would think, little becoming a Christian Divine. If the common arguments against the objection, here urged by him with great pomp, have any weak parts, I shall leave them to Unbelievers to find out—I have the more reason likewise to trust them to their own *weight*, both because they are none of his, and because I have acknowledged their validity. For which acknowledgement, all I get is this—*Whether you had owned this or not* (says he) *I should have taken upon myself the proof.* Whereas, all that he has *taken* is the property of other Writers; made his own, indeed, by a weak and an imperfect representation.—But his answer to the second part of the infidel objection must not be passed over so slightly. "As to the latter part of the objection "(says he) that *from this command, Abraham and his* "*family must needs have thought human sacrifices ac-*" *ceptable to God*; the revoking the command at last "was a sufficient guard against any such construction. "To this you make the Unbeliever answer; *No, because*

" *the action having been commanded, ought to have been* " *condemned; and a simple revocation was no condem-* " *nation.* But why was not the revocation of the Com- " mand, in this case, a condemnation of the action? If " I should tempt you to go and kill your next neighbour, " and afterwards come and desire you not to do it; " would not this after-declaration be as good an evidence " of my dislike to the action, as the first was of my " approbation of it? Yes, and a much better, as it " may be presumed to have been the result of maturer " deliberation. Now, though deliberation and after- " thought are not incident to God; yet as God in this " case condescended (as you say, and very truly) to " act after the manner of men; the same construction " should be put upon his actions, as are usually put " upon the actions of men in like cases." [Consid. pp. 160, 161.] Now, though, as was said above, I would pay all decent regard becoming a friend of Revelation, to the common arguments of others in its defence, yet I must not betray my own. I confessed they had great *weight and validity*; yet, at the same time, I asserted, they were attended with *insuperable difficulties*. And while I so think, I must beg leave to inforce my reasons for this opinion; and, I hope, without offence; as the arguments, I am now about to examine, are purely this Writer's own. And the Reader, by this time, has seen too much of him to be apprehensive, that the lessening his Authority will be attended with any great disservice to Religion.

I had observed, that the reasonings of Unbelievers on this case, as it is commonly explained, were not devoid of all plausibility, when they proceeded thus,—"That as Abraham lived amongst Heathens, whose highest act of divine worship was *human sacrifices*; if God had commanded that Act, and, on the point of performance, only remitted it as a favour, (and so it is represented;) without declaring the iniquity of the practice, when addressed

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to Idols; or his abhorrence of it, when directed to himself; the Family must have been misled in their ideas concerning the moral rectitude of that species of religious worship: Therefore, God, in these circumstances, had he commanded the action as a *trial only*, would have explicitly condemned that mode of worship, as immoral. But he is not represented as condemning, but as remitting it for a *favour*: Consequently, say the Unbelievers, God did not command the action at all."—To this our Examiner replies,—*But why? Was not the revocation of the command, a condemnation of the action? If I should tempt you to go and kill your next neighbour, and afterwards come and* DESIRE *you not to do it, would not this after-declaration be as good an evidence of my dislike to the action, as the first was of my approbation of it?* To this I reply; That the cases are by no means parallel, either in themselves, or in their circumstances: Not *in themselves*; the murder of our next neighbour was, amongst all the Gentiles of that time, esteemed a high immorality; while, on the contrary, human sacrifice was a very holy and acceptable part of divine Worship: Not in *their circumstances:* the *desire* to forbear the murder tempted to, is (in the case he puts) represented as *repentance*; whereas the stop put to the sacrifice of Isaac (in the case Moses puts) is represented as *favour*.

But what follows, I could wish (for the honour of modern Theology) that the method I have observed would permit me to pass over in silence.—*Now though deliberation and after-thought* (says he) *are not incident to God, yet, as God, in this case, condescended (as you say, and very truly) to act after the manner of men; the same construction should be put upon his actions, as is usually put upon the actions of men in like cases.* [Consid. pp. 155, 156.] That is, though *deliberation* and *after-thought* are not incident to God; yet you are to understand his actions, as if they were incident. A horrid interpretation! And yet his representation of the Com-

mand, and his decent illustration of it, by a *murderer in intention*, will not suffer us to understand it in any other manner: For God, as if in haste, and before due deliberation, is represented as commanding an immoral action; yet again, as it were by an *after-thought*, ordering it to be forebore, by reason of its immorality. And in what is all this impious jargon founded? If you will believe him, in the principle I lay down, *That God condescends to act after the manner of men.* I have all along had occasion to complain of his misrepresenting my Principles: but then they were Principles he disliked: and this, the modern management of controversy has sanctified. But here, though the Principle be approved, yet he cannot for his life forbear to misrepresent it: So bad a thing is an evil habit. Let me tell him, then, that by the principle of *God's condescending to act after the manner of men*, is not meant, that he ever acts in compliance to those vices and superstitions, which arise from the depravity of human Will; but in conformity only to men's indifferent manners and customs; and to those Usages which result only from the finite imperfections of their nature. Thus though, as in the case before us, God was pleased, in conformity to their mode of information, to use their custom of revoking a Command; yet he never condescended to imitate (as our Examiner supposes) the irresolution, the repentance, and horrors of conscience of a *murderer in intention.* Which (horrible to think!) is the parallel this orthodox Divine brings to illustrate the Command to Abraham. But he had read that God is sometimes said to *repent*; and he thought, I suppose, it answered to that repentance which the stings of conscience sometimes produce in bad men. Whereas it is said, in conformity to a good magistrate's or parent's correption of vice; first, to threaten punishment; and then, on the offender's amendment, to remit it.

But he goes on without any signs of remorse.—"*Nor "will the Pagan fable of Diana's substituting a Hind*

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" *in the place of Iphigenia* at all help your Unbeliever: " *This did not*, say they, OR YOU FOR THEM, *make* " *idolaters believe that she therefore abhorred human* " *sacrifices.* But do not they themselves, or have not " you assigned a very proper and sufficient reason why " it did not, viz. that they had been *before persuaded* " *of the contrary?* Where human sacrifices make a part " of the settled standing Religion; the refusal to accept " a human sacrifice in one instance may, indeed, be " rather looked upon as a particular indulgence, than as " a declaration against the thing in gross. But where " the thing was commanded but in one single instance, " and the command revoked in that very instance, (which " is our present case) such revocation, in all reasonable " construction, is as effectual a condemnation of the thing, " as if God had told Abraham, in so many words, that " he delighted not in human sacrifices." [Consid. p. 161.] To come to our Examiner's half-buried sense, we are often obliged to remove, or, what is still a more disagreeable labour, to sift well, the rubbish of his words. He says, the *revocation* was an *effectual condemnation.* This may either signify, That men, now free from the prejudices of Pagan superstition, may see that human sacrifices were condemned by the revocation of the Command: or, That Abraham's family could see this. In the first sense, I have nothing to do with his proposition; and in the second, I shall take the liberty to say it is not true. I deny that the *revocation* was an *effectual condemnation.* With how good reason let the Reader now judge.

Abraham, for the great ends of God's Providence, was called out of an idolatrous city, infected, as all such cities then were, with this horrid superstition. He was himself an Idolater, as appears from the words of Joshua, —*Your Fathers dwelt on the other side of the flood in old time, even Terah the father of Abraham, and the father of Nachor: and* THEY *served other Gods. And I took your father Abraham**, &c. God, in the act of calling him,

* Josh. xxiv. 2,

him, instructed him in the Unity of his Nature, and the error of Polytheism; as the great principle, for the sake of which (and to preserve it in one Family amidst an universal overflow of idolatry) he was called out.—That he must be prejudiced in favour of his Country superstitions, is not to be doubted; because it is of human nature to be so; and yet we find no particular instruction given him, concerning the superstition in question. The noble Author of the *Characteristics* observes, that "it "appears that he was under no extreme surprise on this "trying Revelation; nor did he think of expostulating "in the least on this occasion; when at another time "he could be so importunate for the pardon of an in-"hospitable, murderous, impious, and incestuous city:" Insinuating, that this kind of sacrifice was a thing he had been accustomed to. Now the noble Author observes this, upon the Examiner's, that is, the common, interpretation. And I believe, on that footing, he, or a better writer, would find it difficult to take out the malicious sting of the observation. But I have shewn that it falls together with the common Interpretation.

Well; Abraham is now in the land of Canaan; and again surrounded with the same idolatrous and inhuman Sacrificers. Here he receives the *Command:* And, on the point of execution, has the performance remitted to him as a FAVOUR; a circumstance, in the revocation of the *Command,* which I must beg the Examiner's leave to remind him of, especially when I see him, at every turn, much disposed to forget it, that is, to pass it over in silence, without either owning or denying. And, indeed, the little support his reasoning has on any occasion, is only by keeping Truth out of sight. But further, the *favour* was unaccompanied with any instruction concerning the moral nature of this kind of Sacrifice; a practice never positively forbidden but by the Law of Moses. Now, in this case, I would ask any candid Reader, the least acquainted with human nature, whether Abraham

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and his Family, prejudiced as they were in favour of Human Sacrifices (the one, by his education in his country-Religion; the other, by their communication with their Pagan neighbours, and, as appears by Scripture, but too apt of themselves, to fall into idolatry) would not be easily tempted to think as favourably of Human Sacrifices as those Pagans were, who understood that Diana required Iphigenia, though she accepted a Hind in her stead. And with such Readers, I finally leave it.

P. 32. [O]. "Where are your Authorities for all "this? (says Dr. Stebbing.) You produce none. Where- "ever you had your Greek, I am very sure you had it "not from the *New Testament*, where these words "are used indiscriminately." [Consid. pp. 142, 143.] *Where are your Authorities? you produce none.* This is to insinuate, I had none to produce. He dares not, indeed, say so; and in this I commend his prudence. However, thus far he is positive, that *wherever I had my Greek, I had it not from the New Testament.* The Gentleman is hard to please: Here he is offended that I *had it not*; and, before, that I *had it* from the New Testament. Here I impose upon him; there I trifled with him. But, in all this diversity of acceptance, it is still the same spirit: The spirit of *Answering*.

I had said, the two Greek words, *in their exact use*, signify so and so. Which surely implied an acknowledgement, that this exactness was not always observed; especially by the Writers of the New Testament; who, whatever some may have dreamed, did not pique themselves upon what we call, classical elegance. Now, this implication, our Examiner fairly confirms, though, by way of confutation. *In the New Testament* (says he) *these words are used indiscriminately.* I had plainly insinuated as much; and he had better have let it rest on my acknowledgement; for the instances he brings, to

prove

prove the words used indiscriminately in the New Testament, are full enough to persuade the Reader that they are not so used. His first instance is, 1 *Pet.* iv. 13. "*Rejoice* [χαίρετε] *inasmuch as ye are partakers of* "*Christ's sufferings; that when his glory shall be re-* "*vealed* [χαρῆτε ἀγαλλιώμενοι] *ye may be glad with* "*exceeding joy.* See you not here (says he) the direct "reverse of what you say; that χαίρω signifies the joy "which arises upon prospect, and ἀγαλλιάομαι that which "arises from possession?" [Consid. p. 143.] No indeed; I see nothing like it. The followers of Christ are bid to *rejoice*, χαίρετε. For what? *For being partakers of Christ's sufferings.* And was not this a blessing in possession? But it seems our Doctor has but small conception how suffering for a good conscience can be a blessing. Yet at other times he must have thought highly of it, when, in excess of charity, he bespoke the Magistrate's application of it on his Neighbours, under the name of WHOLESOME SEVERITIES. He is just as wide of truth when he tells us, that ἀγαλλιάομαι *signifies the joy which arises on possession.* They are bid to *rejoice* now in sufferings, that they might *be glad with exceeding joy* at Christ's second coming. And is this the being glad for a good in possession? Is it not for a good in prospect? The reward they were then going to receive. For I suppose the appearance of *Christ's glory* will precede the reward of his followers. So that the Reader now sees, he has himself fairly proved for me, the truth of my observation, *That in the exact use of the words,* ἀγαλλιάομαι *signifies that tumultuous pleasure which the certain expectation of an approaching blessing occasions; and* χαίρω *that calm and settled Joy that arises from our knowledge, in the possession of it.*

He goes on. "Rev. xix. 7. *Let us be glad and re-* "*joice* [χαίρωμεν καὶ ἀγαλλιώμεθα] *for the marriage of the* "*Lamb is come.* Where both words (says he) refer to "blessings in possession. Again, Matt. v. 12. *Rejoice* "*and*

" *and be exceeding glad* [χαίρετε καὶ ἀγαλλιᾶσθε] *for great is* " *your reward in Heaven*; where both refer to blessings in " prospect." [Consid. pp. 143, 144.] His old fortune still pursues him. The first text from the Revelations, *Be glad and rejoice,* FOR *the marriage of the Lamb is come*; bids the followers of Christ now do that, which they were bid to prepare for, in the words of St. Peter, *that when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad with exceeding joy.* If, therefore, where they are bid to prepare for their rejoicing, the joy is for a good in prospect (as we have shewn it was) then, certainly, where they are told that this time of rejoicing *is come*, the joy must still be for a good in prospect. And yet he says, *the words refer to blessings in possession.* Again, the text from St. Matthew—*Rejoice and be exceeding glad,* FOR *great is your reward in heaven*, has the same relation to the former part of St. Peter's words [*Rejoice inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings*] as the text in Revelation has to the latter. *Blessed are ye* (says Jesus in this gospel) *when men shall revile you and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely for my sake. Rejoice, and be exceeding glad,* FOR *great is your reward in heaven.* Rejoice! for what? Is it not for the persecutions they suffer for his sake? A *present blessing* sure; though not perhaps to our Author's taste. The reason why they should rejoice, follows, *for great is your reward in heaven.* And yet here, he says, the words *refer to blessings in prospect.* In truth, what led him into all this inverted reasoning, was a pleasant mistake. The one text says—*Be glad and rejoice,* FOR, ὅτι—The other, *Rejoice and be exceeding glad,* FOR, ὅτι—Now he took the particle, in both places, to signify *propter, for the sake of*; whereas it signifies *quoniam, quia*, and, is in proof of something going before. So that he read the text—*Rejoice, for the marriage of the Lamb is come*;—As if it had been—" Rejoice, for the marriage " of the Lamb, WHICH is come:" And—*rejoice, for great*

great is your reward in heaven; as if it had been,— "Rejoice for your great reward in heaven."

But now let us consider these texts in another view, in order to do justice to his delicacy of judgment. I had said that, in the *exact use* of the two Greek words, they signify so and so; and applied that observation to a FACT; where a person was said to have rejoiced, &c. In order to disprove this criticism, he brings three passages, in which those Greek words are used, where NO FACT is related; but where men are, in a rhetorical manner, called upon, and bid to rejoice, &c. In which latter case, the use of one word for another, is an elegant conversion. Those, in possession of a blessing, are bid to rejoice with that exceeding joy, which men generally have in the certain expectation of one approaching; and those in expectation, with that calm and settled joy, which attends full possession. And who but our Examiner could not see, that the use of words is one thing, in an historical assertion; and quite another, in a rhetorical invocation?

Having thus ably acquitted himself in one criticism, he falls upon another. "What shall we do with ἵνα?"— What indeed! But no sooner said than done. "Ἵνα "*(says he)* is often put for ὅτε or ὅτι, positive as you are, "that it always refers to a future time." [Consid. p. 144.] Now, so far from being *positive* of this, I am positive of the contrary, that there is not one word of truth in all he says. I observed indeed, that ἵνα ἴδῃ, in the text, *refers only to a future time.* And this I say still, though our Translators have rendered it, equivocally, *to see.* Yet he affirms, that I say, "ἵνα [standing alone] always refers to "a future time." That I am positive of it, nay very positive, "positive as you are," says he. And to shame me of this evil habit, he proceeds to shew, from several texts, that ἵνα is often put for ὅτε or ὅτι. "Thus John "xvi. 2. *The time cometh* THAT [ἵνα] *whosoever killeth* "*you will think he doth God service.* Again: 1 Cor. iv. 3. "*With me it is a small thing* THAT [ἵνα] *I should be*

" *judged of you.* And nearer to the point yet, 3 John 4. " *I have no greater joy* [ἵνα ἀκούω] than THAT I hear, or, " than TO *hear that my children walk in the truth.*" And why not here, Sir; *Abraham rejoiced* [ἵνα ἴδῃ] " WHEN he saw, or THAT he saw, or (which is equiva- " lent) TO SEE my Day." [Consid. p. 144.] For all this kindness, the best acknowledgement I can make, is to return him back his own criticism; only the *Greek* words put into *Latin.* The *Vulgate* has rendered ἵνα ἴδῃ by *ut videret*, which words I will suppose the Translator to say (as without doubt he would) *refer only to a future time.* On which, I will be very learned and critical:—" Positive as you are, Sir, that *ut* always refers " to a *future time*, I will shew you that it is sometimes " put for *postquam*, the *past.*

" *Ut vidi, ut perii, ut me malus abstulit Error!*

" and sometimes (which is yet nearer to the point) for " *quanto—Ut quisque optimè Græcè sciret, ita esse ne-* " *quissimum.* And why not here, Sir, *Abraham* rejoiced " [*ut videret*] WHEN HE saw, or THAT he saw, or which " is equivalent, TO SEE my day?"—And now he says, *there is but one difficulty that stands in his way.* And what is this, I pray you? Why, that according to his (Dr. Stebbing's) interpretation, " the latter part of the sen- " tence is a repetition of the former. *Abraham rejoiced* " *to see my day, and he saw it and was glad*; i. e. " *Abraham rejoiced to see, and then saw and rejoiced.*" But such kind of repetitions are frequent in the sacred " Dialect; and, in my humble opinion, it has an ele- " gance here. *Abraham rejoiced to see,* καὶ εἶδε, καὶ " ἐχάρη, HE BOTH SAW AND WAS GLAD." [*Consid.* pp. 144, 145.] Before he talked of *repetitions in the sacred Dialect*, and pronounced upon their qualities, he should have known how to distinguish between a *pleonasm* and a *tautology*; the first of which, indeed, is often an *elegance*; the latter, always a blemish in expression: and in the number of the latter, is this *elegant repetition* of

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the Doctor's own making. Where a repetition of the same thing is given in different words, it is called a *pleonasm*; when in the same words (as in the Doctor's translation of the text in question) it is a *tautology*, which, being without reason, has neither grace nor *elegance*. Nay the very pretence it has to common sense arises from our being able to understand the equivocal phrase, *to see*, in my meaning, of, *that he might see*. Confine it to the Doctor's, of—*Abraham rejoiced when he had seen my day; and he saw it and was glad*, and the *absurdity* becomes apparent. For the latter part of the sentence beginning with the conjunction completive καὶ, it implies a further predication. Yet in his translation there is none; though he makes an effort towards it, in dropping the sense of καὶ in the sound of BOTH.

P. 32. [P]. Dr. Stebbing tells me, "there is not one "word, in the history of the Old Testament, to justify "this threefold distinction:" and that I myself CONFESS as much. It is true, I confess that what is not in the Old Testament is not to be found there. And had he been as modest, he would have been content to find a *future state* in the New Testament only.—But where is it, I would ask, that "I confess there is not one word, "in the history of the Old Testament, to justify this "three-fold distinction?" I was so far from any such thought, that I gave a large epitome * of Abraham's whole history, to shew that it justified this *three-fold distinction*, in every part of it. His manner of proving my confession will clearly detect the fraud and falsehood of his charge. For, instead of doing it from my own words, he would argue me into it, from his own inferences. "You confess it (says he); FOR you say, that "Moses's history begins with the second period, and "that the first was wisely omitted by the historian." Let us apply this reasoning to a parallel case. I will sup-

* From pp. 10 to 14, of this volume.

pose

pose him to tell me (for, after this, he may tell me any thing) "that I myself confess there is not one word in "the Iliad of Homer, to justify me in saying that there "were three periods in the destruction of Troy; the first, "the robbery of Helen; the second, the combats before "the Walls; and the third, the storming of the Town "by the Greeks; FOR that I say, that Homer's poem "begins at the second period; wisely omitting the first "and the last." Now will any one conclude, from this reasoning, that I had made any such confession?

P. 33. [Q]. This shews why GOD might say to *Hosea, Go take unto thee a wife of whoredoms, &c.* ch. i. ver. 2. Though all actions which have no *moral import* are indifferent; yet some of this kind (which would even be indifferent, had they a moral import) may, on the very account of their having no *moral import*, be the object of pleasure or displeasure. Thus, in the adventure between Elisha and Joash, we are told, that the Prophet said unto the King, "Take bow and arrows; and "he took unto him bow and arrows. And he said to "the king of Israel, Put thine hand upon the bow; and "he put his hand upon it; and Elisha put his hands "upon the king's hands. And he said, Open the window "eastward; and he opened it. Then Elisha said, Shoot; "and he shot. And he said, The arrow of the Lord's "deliverance from Syria: for thou shalt smite the Syrians "in Aphek, till thou have consumed them. And he said, "Take the arrows; and he took them. And he said "unto the king of Israel, Smite upon the ground; and "he smote thrice, and stayed. And the man of God "*was wroth with him*, and said, Thou shouldest have "smitten five or six times, then hadst thou smitten Syria, "till thou hadst consumed it: whereas now thou shalt "smite Syria but thrice." 2 Kings xiii. 15—19. Here it is not difficult to apprehend, that the Prophet, by God's command, directed the King to perform a significative

action, whose meaning GOD had beforehand explained to his Messenger: and, amongst the particulars of it, had told him this, that the Syrians should be smitten as often as the King smote upon the ground, when the Prophet should order him (only in general words) *to smite* it. Hence the Prophet's anger, occasioned by his love to his country, on the King's stopping when he had *smote thrice.*

P. 33. [R.] To this Dr. Stebbing answers, "I can "easily understand, Sir, how the matter stood with "Abraham; and that HE was in no danger of being "misled, as to the nature of human Sacrifices, who knew "the secret of the whole affair; and that it was nothing "else but Scenery. But how this answer will serve for "*his Family*, who are to be presumed to have known "nothing of this scenical representation, is utterly past "my comprehension;—because you have told us from "the very first, that the information to be conveyed by "it was intended for Abraham's SOLE USE; and I do "not see how Abraham could open to his family the "scenery of the transaction, without explaining the "*mystery*.—But is not your putting the *Family* of "Abraham, in possession of this consequence, a very "plain declaration, that they knew the mystery of Christ's "sacrifice? Now therefore, Sir, take your choice, and "give up one part of your hypothesis, or the other, as "best pleases you; for to hold both is imposible. If you "say that the family of Abraham were acquainted with "the mystery of Christ's sacrifice; it will overturn all "you have said concerning their ignorance of a future "state: It likewise overturns the single reason you have "given why the explanation (usual in all such cases) to "shew the import of the transaction was not added, *viz.* "that it was a point *not fit for common knowledge.* "But if you shall chuse to say, that the revelation of "this mystery was for the SOLE information of Abraham, "and that his family knew nothing of it, the objection "will lie full against you, unanswered." [Consid. p. 166.]

I had

I had said, that the command was for *Abraham's sole use*; and "therefore (says the Doctor) the Family of "Abraham must be presumed to know nothing of this "scenical representation:" Notwithstanding this, *I presume* (he says) *that they did know it.* Here he takes me in a flagrant contradiction. But did he indeed not apprehend that where I spoke of its being given for *Abraham's sole use*, I was opposing it (as the course of my argument required) not to the single family which THEN lived under his tents, but to the Jewish People, WHEN the history of the transaction was recorded?—And now having shewn his wrong conclusion from MY words, let us consider next the wrong conclusion he draws from HIS OWN,—*I do not see* (says he) *how Abraham could open to his family the scenery of the transaction, without explaining the mystery.* What does he mean by, *opening the scenery of the transaction?* There are two senses of this ambiguous expression; it may signify, either, *explaining the moral of the scenery*; or simply, *telling his family that the transaction was a scenical representation.* He could not use the phrase in the first sense, because he makes *explaining the mystery* a thing different from *opening the scenery.* He must mean it then in the latter. But could not Abraham tell his Family, that this was a *scenical representation*, without *explaining the mystery?* I do not know what should hinder him, unless it was the sudden loss of speech. If he had the free use of his tongue, I think, he might, in the transports of his joy, on his return home, tell his Wife, "That God had ordered him to sacrifice his Son, and that he had carried this Son to mount Moriah, in obedience to the divine Command, where a ram was accepted in his stead; but that the whole was a mere scenical representation, to figure out a mysterious transaction which God had ordained to come to pass in the latter ages of the world." And I suppose when he had once told his wife, the Family would soon hear of it. Now could they not

understand, what was meant by a *scenical representation*, as well when he told them it was to prefigure a mystery, as if he had told them it was to prefigure the *crucifixion of Jesus?* Had I no other way of avoiding his dilemma (for if I escape his *Contradiction*, he has set his *Dilemma-trap*, which he says it is impossible I should escape) had I nothing else, I say, it is very likely I should have insisted upon this explanation: But there are more safe ways than one of taking him by his Horns. "Now "therefore (says he) take your choice, and give up one "part of your hypothesis or the other, as best pleases "you; FOR TO HOLD BOTH IS IMPOSSIBLE. If you "say that the family of Abraham were acquainted with "the Mystery, it will overturn all you said concerning "their ignorance of a Future State—But if you shall "chuse to say that the revelation of the Mystery was for "the sole information of Abraham, and that his Family "knew nothing of it, then—the construction in favour "of human Sacrifices must have been the very same as "if no such representation, as you speak of, had been "intended." I desire to know where it is that I have spoken ANY THING *of the ignorance of Abraham's Family concerning a Future State.* But I am afraid, something is wrong here again: and that, by *Abraham's Family*, he means the *Israelites under Moses's policy:* for, with regard to them, I did indeed say that the gross body of the People were ignorant of a Future State. But then I supposed them equally ignorant of the true import of the Command to Abraham. But if by *Abraham's Family* he means, as every man does, who means honestly, those few of his houshold, I suppose them indeed acquainted with the true import of the Command; but then, at the same time, not ignorant of a future State. Thus it appears that what our Examiner had pronounced IMPOSSIBLE, was all the while very possible. And in spite of this terrible Dilemma, both parts of the hypothesis are at peace. I can hardly think him so immoral

as to have put a designed trick upon his Reader: I rather suppose it to be some confused notion concerning the Popish virtue of TRADITION (that trusty Guardian of Truth) which led him into all this absurdity: and made him conclude, that what Abraham's houshold once knew, the Posterity of Abraham could never forget. Though the WRITTEN WORD tells us, that when Moses was sent to redeem this Posterity from bondage, they remembered so little of God's Revelations to their Forefathers, that they knew nothing even of his NATURE, and therefore did, as men commonly do in the like case, enquire after his NAME.

P. 37. [S] "To me (says the noble writer) it plainly "appears, that in the early times of *all* Religions, when "nations were yet barbarous and savage, there was ever "an aptness or tendency towards the dark part of Super-"stition, which, amongst many other horrors, produced "that of *human Sacrifice*. Something of this nature "might possibly be deduced even from Holy Writ."—To this a note refers in the following words—Gen. xxii. 1. and Judg. xi. 30. *These places relating to* Abraham *and* Jephthah *are cited only with respect to the notion which these primitive warriors may be said to have entertained concerning this horrid enormity, so common amongst the inhabitants of the* Palestine *and other neighbouring nations. It appears that even the elder of these* Hebrew *princes was under no extreme surprise on this trying revelation. Nor did he think of expostulating, in the least, on this occasion; when at another time he could be so importunate for the pardon of an inhospitable, murderous, impious and incestuous city,* Gen. xviii. 23, &c. Charact. vol. iii. p. 124.

Dr. Stebbing will needs try his strength with the noble Author of the *Characteristics*. For, whether I quote for approbation or condemnation, it is all one; this active Watchman of the Church militant will let nothing escape

him, that he finds in my service; nor leave any thing unpurified that has once passed through my hands. To this passage of the noble Lord he replies, "The cases "widely differ. God did not open *precisely* what he "intended to do with these wicked cities; only said, "Judgement was passed. But what has this to do with "Isaac, who did not stand as a sinner before God; but "as a Sacrifice, acknowledging God's sovereign domi-"nion. For Abraham to intercede here would have "inferred a reluctancy to do homage, which would have "destroyed the perfection of his resignation." [Hist. of Abr. pp. 41, 42.] So, Isaac's innocence, and his *not standing a sinner before God* when he was doomed to death, makes him a less proper object of Abraham's intercession and compassion, than a devoted City, *inhospitable, murderous, impious, and incestuous.* This is our Doctor's HUMANITY: and a modest petition of the Father of the faithful, like that of the Saviour of the world, *If it be possible, let this cup pass from me, nevertheless not as I will but as thou wilt,* would have *destroyed all the perfection of his resignation.* And this is our Doctor's DIVINITY! Strange! that this Father of Orthodoxy could not see, that what might be done by the divine *Antitype* himself, without *destroying his perfection of resignation,* might likewise be done, without that loss, in behalf of the *Type.* After so fine a specimen of what great things he is able to do against this formidable Enemy of Revelation; what pity is it, he was never set on work by his Superiors, *in a more avowed and open manner!*

P. 43. [T]. This man, not long since, wrote against the D. L. under the name of a *Society of Free-thinkers:* by the same kind of figure, I suppose, that He in the Gospel called himself *Legion,* who was only the forwardest Devil of the Crew.

P. 43. [U]. But I mistake. Unbelievers, I think, are not yet quite so shameless. The objection, in form,

comes from another quarter. It is Dr. Stebbing, who, for the honour of the Church, makes it for them. He will not allow that the words of Jesus are of any validity to support my interpretation of the *Command* to Abraham, because Unbelievers will not admit the inspiration of the New Testament. But what then? they have not yet disputed with me my interpretation of the *Command*. Nobody hath done this but Dr. Stebbing. And I hope the Authority of Jesus will stand good against him. He was in haste to do their business for them: and, it must be confessed, by an argument that does equal credit to his logic and his piety.

Fair reasoners of all parties will see, tho' Dr. Stebbing will not, that the question is not *particular*, concerning the *inspiration* of the Old and New Testament; but *general*, of the *connexion* between them; and those will not be so unreasonable to expect I should prove this connexion, of which they ask a proof, any otherwise than by applying each reciprocally to explain and to support the other. If the two Testaments be shewn to do this; while on the other hand, when singly considered, and without each other's mutual assistance, they are inexplicable, the connexion between them is fairly made out. The objection of Unbelievers stands thus. "You pretend (say they) that these two Dispensations are two constituent *parts* of God's great moral economy: If this be true, they must needs have a strong connexion and real relation to one another. Shew us this connexion and relation: and amuse us no longer with proving the divinity of this or that Dispensation separately, as if each were independent on the other." I comply with their demand: And now Dr. Stebbing tells me, I take this or that Revelation for granted which I should have proved. Whereas in truth I take nothing for granted but what Unbelievers are ready to prove against me, if I did not: namely, that between two Dispensations, the one pretended to be preparatory to the other, there must needs

be a strong and near connexion and relation. And if, in the course of evincing this connexion, I urge some circumstances in the Jewish to support the Christian, and others in the Christian to support the Jewish, this, I suppose, is not *taking for granted* the truth either of one or the other, but *proving* the divinity of both.

P. 49. [X]. Hence we see the vanity of Mr. Whiston's distinction, who is for retaining *Types* (necessitated thereunto by the express declarations of Holy Writ) and for rejecting *double senses*. "Mr. Whiston (says the author "of *the Grounds, &c.)* justifies *typical* arguing *from* "*the ritual laws of* Moses, *and from passages of History* "*in the Old Testament.*—Indeed he pretends *this* last "to be *quite another thing from the odd* (typical) *appli-* "*cation of prophecies.* For (says he) the ancient cere- "monial institutions were, as to *their principal branches,* "*at least in their own nature,* Types and shadows of "future good things—*But the case of the ancient pro-* "*phecies to be alleged from the old Scriptures for the* "*confirmation of Christianity is quite of another nature,* "*and of a more nice and exact consideration.*" pp. 227, 228. It appears, indeed, they are *of a more nice and exact consideration,* even from Mr. Whiston's so much mistaking them, as to suppose they are of *a nature quite different from Types.* But instead of telling us honestly that he knew not what to make of them, he plays the courtier, and dismisses them, for *a more nice and exact consideration.*

P. 51. [Y]. The Bishop of London, in his *Discourses on the Use and Intent of Prophecy,* seemed to have but a slender idea of this *use* when he wrote as follows— "There was no occasion (says he) to lay in so long "beforehand the evidence of prophecy, to convince men "of things that were to happen in their own times: *and* "*it gives us a low idea of the administration of Provi-* "*dence* in sending Prophets one after another in every

"age

" age from Adam to Christ, to imagine that all this ap-
" paratus was for their sakes who lived IN OR AFTER
" the times of Christ." p. 37. But such is the way of these Writers who have a favourite doctrine to inforce. The truth of that doctrine (if it happen to be a truth) is supported at the expence of all others. Thus his Lordship, setting himself to prove that *Prophecy was given principally to support the Faith and Religion of the World,* thought he could not sufficiently secure his point without weakening and discrediting another of, at least, equal importance,—*That it was given to afford testimony to the mission of Jesus.*

P. 55. [Z]. This account of Types and secondary senses, which supposes they were intended to conceal the doctrines delivered under them, is so very natural, and, as would seem, reasonable, that Dr. Stebbing himself subscribes to it. And hence occasion has been taken by a most acute and able Writer to expose his prevarication, in maintaining that the Jews had the revealed Doctrine of a Future State: For the Doctor not only confesses that the Doctrine was revealed under Types, but that Doctrines, thus conveyed, were purposely secreted from the knowledge of the ancient Jews. See *the Argument of the Divine Legation fairly stated,* p. 125. And, *the free and candid Examination of Bishop Sherlock's Sermons,* &c. chap. ii. where the controversy on this point is fairly determined, as far as truth and reason can determine any thing.

P. 70. [AA]. Hear what a very judicious Critic observes of the line in question. " The comment of
" SERVIUS on this line is remarkable. *Hunc versum*
" *notant Critici,* quasi superfluè et inutiliter *additum,*
" *nec convenientem gravitati ejus, namque est magis*
" *neotericus.* Mr. ADDISON conceived of it in the
" same manner when he said, *this was the only witty*
" *line in the Æneis*; meaning such a line as *Ovid* would

" have

" have written. We see they esteemed it a wanton play " of fancy, unbecoming the dignity of the Writer's work, " and the gravity of his character. They took it, in " short, for a mere *modern* flourish, totally different from " the pure unaffected manner of genuine antiquity. And " thus far they unquestionably judged right. Their " defect was in not seeing that the *use* of it, as here " employed by the Poet, was an exception to the *general* " *rule*. But to have seen this was not, perhaps, to be " expected even from these Critics. However, from " this want of penetration arose a difficulty in deter- " mining whether to read *facta* or *fata* nepotum. And " as we now understand that *Servius* and his Critics " were utter strangers to Virgil's noble idea, it is no " wonder they could not resolve it. But the *latter* is the " Poet's own word. He considered this shield of " celestial make as a kind of *Palladium*, like the ANCILE " which fell from Heaven, and used to be carried in " procession on the *shoulders* of the SALII, *Quid de* " *scutis* (says Lactantius) *jam vetustate putridis dicam?* " *Quæ cum portant*, DEOS IPSOS SE GESTARE HUMERIS " SUIS arbitrantur. [Div. Inst. lib. i. c. 21.] Virgil, in " a fine flight of imagination, alludes to this venerable " ceremony, comparing, as it were, the shield of his hero " to the sacred ANCILE; and, in conformity to the " practice in that sacred procession, represents his hero " in the priestly office of religion,

"*Attollens* HUMERO *famamque et* FATA *Nepotum.*

" This idea then, of the sacred shield, the guard and " glory of Rome, and on which, in this *advanced* situation, " depended the fame and fortune of his country, the " Poet with extreme elegance and sublimity tranfers to " the shield which guarded their great Progenitor, while " he was laying the first foundations of the Roman " Empire." *Mr.* HURD—*Notes on the Epistle to Augustus*, pp. 68, 69. 3d ed.

P. 76.

P. 76. [BB]. The Reader sees, however, by this, that he at length takes ALLEGORIES *and* SECONDARY SENSES *not to be the same:* In which, I must crave leave to tell him, he is mistaken; *Religious allegories* (the only allegories in question) being no other than a species of *secondary senses.* This may be news to our Critic, though he has written and printed so much about ALLEGORIES, that is, about *secondary senses*; as Monsieur Jordan was surprised to find he had talked prose all his lifetime, without knowing it.

P. 77. [CC]. Dr. Stebbing, of this SOME (by one of his arts of controversy) has made ALL. And charges me * with giving this as the character of *double prophecies* in general, that *without Miracles in their conformation they could hardly have the sense contended for well ascertained.* On the contrary, he assures his reader that no Prophecy can have its sense supported by Miracles.—That part which relates to the Morality of the Doctor's conduct in this matter, I shall leave to himself: with his Logic I have something more to say. The *Miracles,* which the Reader plainly sees I meant, were those worked by Jesus; and the Prophecies, some of those which Jesus quoted, as relating to himself. But the Doctor tells us, "That Miracles are not to be taken for "granted in our disputes with Unbelievers." In some of our disputes with Unbelievers, they are not to be taken for granted; in some they are. When the dispute is, whether the truth of Jesus' *Mission* appear from Miracles, it would be absurd to take Miracles for granted: but when the dispute is, whether the truth of his *Messiah-character* appear from Prophecies, there is no absurdity in taking his Miracles for granted; because an unbeliever may deny his *Messiah-character,* which arises from Prophecies, and yet acknowledge this *Mission* which is proved by Miracles; but he cannot deny the truth of his

* See Hist. of Abr. pp. 61, 62, 63, &c.

mission,

mission, which is proved by Miracles, and yet acknowledge his Miracles. But more than this—An Unbeliever not only *may allow* us to suppose the truth of Miracles when the question is about the proof of the *Messiah-character* from Prophecies; but the Unbeliever, with whom I had here to do, Mr. Collins, does *actually allow* us, in our dispute with him, to suppose the truth of Miracles: For thus he argues, "Jesus, you say, has proved his Mission by Miracles. In good time. But he had another Character to support, that of a *promised Messiah*, for which he appeals to the Prophecies: Now, 1st, these Prophecies relate not to him, but to another. And 2dly, Miracles never can make that relate to him which relate to another." In answer to this, I proposed to shew, that the first proposition was absolutely false, and that the second very much wanted to be qualified. In the course of this dispute, I had occasion to urge the evidence of Miracles; and Mr. Collins, while denying the *Messiah-character*, had permitted me to suppose their truth. Unluckily, the Doctor, who saw nothing of all this, takes what Logicians call the *point assumed*, and the *point to be proved*, for one and the same thing. That Jesus was a *divine Messenger*, and worked Miracles, is the point *assumed* by me; and Mr. Collins, overconfident of his cause, permitted me to assume it. That Jesus was the *Messiah* foretold, is the point *to be proved*; and I did not expect that any other than a follower of Mr. Collins would deny I had proved it. But I will be fair even with so unfair an Adversary as Dr. Stebbing, and urge *his cause* with an advantage with which I will suppose he would have urged it himself had he known how. It may be questioned whether it be strictly logical to employ this topic (which Mr. Collins allows us to assume) of Jesus's *divine Mission*, in order to prove his *Messiahship?* Now all that can be here objected is, that we *assume* one Character, in order to *prove* another, in the same divine Person. And what is there illogical

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in this? Who ever objected to the force of that reasoning against Lord Bolingbroke, which from the Attributes of God's *power and wisdom* which his Lordship allowed the Author of the *View of his Philosophy* to assume, inferred and proved God's *justice and goodness*, which his Lordship denied?

But to satisfy, not the Doctor, but any more reasonable man, I will suppose, it may be asked, "Of what use are Prophecies thus circumstanced, that is to say, such as require the evidence of Miracles to ascertain their sense?" I reply, of very important use; as they open and reveal more clearly the mutual dependency and connexion of the two Dispensations on one another, in many particulars which would otherwise have escaped our notice: And, by this means, strengthen several additional proofs of the *Messiahship* of Jesus, on which the Gospel doctrine of *Redemption* depends. But was there no more in it than this, The rescuing *some* prophecies quoted in the New Testament as relating to Jesus, out of the hands of Unbelievers, who have taken an occasion, from their generality or obscurity, to persuade the people that they relate entirely to another matter; this, I say, would be no less than clearing the truth of the *Messiahship* from inextricable difficulties.—I will now take a final leave of this *Answerer by profession*; an Answerer of such eminence, that he may indeed be called,

Knight of the Shire, who represents them all.

But as he displays at parting all the effrontery of his miserable trade, I will just stop to new-burnish his complexion.

I had called my Argument a *Demonstration*, which one would think no one who could distinguish *Morals* from *Physics* could mistake, or would venture to misrepresent. Yet hear Dr. Stebbing's last words,—"That "Moses was the Legislator of the Jews, and that the "Jews were ignorant of a Future State; these facts "must be known by history, which spoils you for a

"Demonstrator

" Demonstrator at once: For historical evidence goes " no further than *probability*; and if this must concur " to make up the evidence, it cannot be a *Demonstration:* " For Demonstration cannot stand upon probability. " The evidence may be good and sufficient, but *Demon-* " *stration* it cannot be; *which is always founded upon* " *self-evident truths, and is carried on by a chain or series* " *of the most simple ideas hanging upon each other by* " *a necessary connexion.*" [Letter to the Dean of Bristol, pp. 9, 10.] And was it for this, that this wonderful man hath written half a score Pamphlets against the *Divine Legation*, that he could not find in it the same sort of *Demonstration* which he hath been told may be seen in Euclid?

P. 87. [DD]. Nothing can be more simple than the principle here inforced, or more agreeable to the rules of just interpretation, than to suppose, that the *Language of the Law*, in the terms ALTAR, SACRIFICE, &c. is employed to convey these prophetic intimations of the Gospel. The ancient fathers of the Church very improvidently continued the use of these terms, when speaking of the Christian Rites: For though they used them, and professed to use them metaphorically, yet it gave countenance to strange extravagance of Scripture-interpretation amongst the Romanists. The ingenious Author of the *Principes de la foi Chretienne*, Tom. i. p. 273. brings this prophecy of Malachi for a proof of the divine institution of the sacrifice of the Mass.

P. 96. [EE]. It is wonderful to consider how little the Writers, on either side the question, have understood of the *logical propriety and moral fitness* of Types, and secondary senses of Prophecy.

Dr. Middleton and Dr. Sykes, who agreed with Mr. Collins in laughing at these modes of information, agreed with him likewise, in laying down such principles, and inculcating such ideas of the Mosaic Religion, as most effectually

effectually tended to evince this *logical propriety and moral fitness.*

On the other hand, Bishop Sherlock, Dr. Stebbing, and other advocates for Types and secondary senses of Prophecy, lay down such principles, and inculcate such ideas of the Mosaic Religion, as would totally supersede the use of these modes of information, and consequently destroy both their *logical propriety and moral fitness.*—See the *Free and candid Examination of Bishop Sherlock's Principles*, &c. chap. ii.

P. 103. [FF]. M. BOUILLER, the ingenious Author of the *Court Examen de la Thése de Mr. L'Abbé de* PRADES, *et Observations sur son Apologie*, having charged *de Prades* with taking his idea of the Mosaic Economy from this Work, without owning it, goes on, in his own way, to shew that the ARGUMENT of *the Divine Legation*, as delivered in these Volumes, is CONCLUSIVE.—

- - - "La Loi Mosaïque, considerée comme fondement d'un etablissement national et temporel, n'avoit que des promesses et des menaces, ne proposoit que des peines des recompenses temporelles : aulieu qu'à considerer *les grandes vues de cet etablissement, par rapport à l'Eglise même*, la Loi étoit une espece de tableau emblématique, qui sous l'enveloppe des objets charnels *figuroit les spirituels*; ensorte que, en raisonnant selon les principes d'une juste analogie, la foi des *Israélites éclairés* et pieux, trouvoit dans les promesses de la Loi, *qui portoient uniquement sur les biens presens*, un nouveau garand de la certitude des biens avenir. Mais comme on doit bien se souvenir, que dans cette Nation, les Fideles ne faisoient QUE LE PETIT NOMBRE, *l'argument de* WARBURTON, *tiré du silence de la Loi sur une economie avenir, en faveur de la divinité de cette Loi même, conserve toute sa force*; car il demeure toujours vrai qu'il n'a pas fallu moins que la vertu des MIRACLES

et

et l'efficace d'une impression surnaturelle, pour faire ployer *le gross de la Nation*, c'est-à-dire les Juifs charnels, qui ne pénétroient point ces vues Mystérieuses, sous le joug pesant de la Dispensation Mosaïque." [pp. 94, 95.] And again, "Ce double Caractere de la Dispensation Mosaïque met sa divinité hors d'atteinte à tous les traits les plus envenimés du Déisme qui l'attaque par deux batteries opposées. Quoi? disent nos Libertins, une Religion qui promet uniquement les biens de la Terre, peut-elle être digne de Dieu! Et lorsque, pour leur répondre, ayant recours au sens mystique, on dit que les promesses Légales qui, prises à la lettre, n'offrent qu'un bonheur temporel, doivent s'entendre spirituellement; ces Messieurs se retournent aussi-tot avec une merveilleuse adresse pour vous demander comment un Oracle, qui trompe les hommes, et qui n'a point d'accomplissement dans le sens le plus clair, le plus propre, et le plus littéral de ce qu'il promet, peut être regardé comme un Oracle divin? Question, qui dans l'hypothese commune, me paroit plus difficile à résoudre d'une façon satisfaisante. Mais l'une et l'autre objection tombe, dès qu'on envisage l'ancienne economie telle qu'elle est; c'est-à-dire, tout à la fois comme Alliance nationale et comme economie religieuse. En qualité d'Alliance nationale, ses promesses sont toutes Charnelles, et *s'accomplissent à la terre* à l'egard des *Juifs*. Mais en qualité d'economie religieuse, *essentiellement liée au plan de l'Evangile*, elle est pour les *Fidéles*, la figure et le gage des biens spirituels. Doublement digne du Dieu de vérité, et par *l'accomplissement litteral de ses promesses*, et par leur usage typique, la réunion de ces deux rapports y annonce l'ouvrage de son infinie sagesse." [*Addition à l'Article* iv. p. 104.]

Thus far this ingenious Writer. But now a difficulty will occur. He owns the Author of *the Divine Legation* hath made out his point, that the Law of Moses is from God: He contends that the Author's system is the *only one* that can support this Revelation against the objections

jections of Deists and Libertines: Yet when he has done this, he has thought fit to call this very system, a *Paradox*; though it goes upon his own principle, *That the Mosaic Dispensation had a double character; that it was a national Alliance, and was at the same time essentially united to the Gospel plan; that this double Character, though not apprehended by the body of the Jewish People, yet was well understood by those peculiarly favoured of God, their Prophets, and Leaders.* This censure, if it be intended for one, I say, appears to me a little mysterious. However, the learned Writer's words are these—

" Quand *Mr. de Prades* a dit que l'œconomie Mosaïque n'étoit fondée que sur les peines et les recompenses temporelles, et qu'il a soutenu que cela même fournit une bonne preuve de la divinité de cette œconomie, il n'a fait autre chose que suivre la trace du savant *Warburton*, qui avança ce PARADOXE, il y a déja quelques années, dans son fameux Ouvrage *de la Divine Legation de Moïse*, et employa tour à tour pour le defendre, le raisonnement et l'erudition. Notre Bachelier, aussi-bien que *M. Hooke*, qu'il cite pour son garand, auroient bien dû faire honneur à l'illustre Docteur Anglois, d'une pensée que personne ne doutera qu'ils n'ayent puisée chez lui." [p. 88.] Now, I have so good opinion of this learned Writer's candour as to believe that either he used the word *paradox* in an indifferent sense, or that he was misled in his Judgment of *the Divine Legation* by Mr. de Prades and Mr. Hooke: Who although they borrowed what they have delivered concerning the nature of the Mosaic Economy from that book, which they did not think fit to confess, yet it is as certain that what they borrowed they either did not understand, or at least have misrepresented. The learned Sorbonist has since published his Course of Theology, intitled *Religionis naturalis et revelatæ Principia.* In which, though he has consulted his ease and perhaps his reputation, in transcribing the reasonings of *the Divine Legation* on various points

of Theology, and generally without reference to the Book or the Author; yet his affairs with his Body have taught him caution, and obliged him to declare against the PROPOSITION, in support of which, those reasonings were employed by their original Author. For when he comes to the question, concerning *the sanction of the Jewish Law*, he introduces it in the following manner—Quæstionem inchoamus difficilem, in qua explicanda adhibenda est summa verborum proprietas, ne Pelagianis ex una parte non satis fœdus Mosaicum & Evangelicum discriminantibus, aut contrariis RECENTIORUM QUORUMDAM erroribus favere videamur. And so, fortifies himself with Suarez and St. Thomas. The consequence of which is, that the two large Chapters in his second Volume (the first, To prove that a future state was always a popular doctrine amongst the Jews; and the second, That temporal rewards and punishments were really and equally distributed amongst them under the Theocracy) just serve to confute one another: Or more properly, the second Chapter, by aid of the Arguments taken from *the Divine Legation*, effectually overturns all that he has advanced in the first.—See M. Hooke's second volume of his Course, intitled, *Religionis naturalis et revelatæ Principia*, from pp. 208 to 236. For the rest, this justice is due to the learned and ingenious Writer, that these *Principles of natural and revealed Religion* compose the best reasoned Work in defence of Revelation which we have yet seen come from that quarter.

THE

NINTH BOOK

OF THE

DIVINE LEGATION

OF

MOSES:

BEING AN ATTEMPT TO EXPLAIN

THE TRUE NATURE AND GENIUS

OF THE

CHRISTIAN RELIGION.

Printed, so far as it goes, by the AUTHOR;
and left unfinished:

FIRST PUBLISHED IN 1788.

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☞ THE Reader has been already referred to an Explanation of the omission of Books VII. & VIII.—And lest, in the preceding Title page to the IXth Book, the words "left unfinished" might operate to the prejudice of this division of the work, it may be proper to repeat here a few words from Bishop HURD's introductory *Discourse*:—"This IXth Book is the noblest effort that has hitherto "been made to give a RATIONALE OF CHRISTIANITY... Very little is "wanting to complete the Author's design; only what he had proposed "to say on the apocalyptic prophecies, and which may be supplied from the "*Discourse on Antichrist.*"—See Vol. I. of this Edit. pp. 86. 89.—*Ed.*

INTRODUCTION*

TO THE

NINTH BOOK

OF

THE DIVINE LEGATION OF MOSES.

TRUTH, the great Object of all honest as well as rational Inquiries, had been long sought for in vain; when, the Search now become desperate, after the fruitless toil of the best qualified Sages, and of the most improved times, She suddenly appeared in PERSON to put these benighted Wanderers in their Way. I AM THE TRUTH, says the Saviour of the World. This was his Moral Nature; of more concern for us to know, than his Physical; and, on that account, explained more at large in his *eternal Gospel*.

This last book, therefore, being an attempt to explain the true NATURE AND GENIUS OF THE CHRISTIAN RELIGION; I shall,

1. First of all, previously examine those sceptical Objections, which in the long absence of Truth, the World had begun to entertain of her very Being and existence; or at least of our capacity to discover, and get hold of her. And these being removed,

2. I shall, in the second place, lay down, under what laws, and with what disposition of mind, I have ventured to use the aids of REASON to explain the TRUTHS OF REVELATION.

3. And, lastly, I shall attempt to remove the Prejudices which may arise against any new discoveries in support of REVELATION, which the method here em-

* See Sermon, concerning *The Nature and Condition of Truth*; Serm. I. Vol. IX. of this Edit.

ployed

ployed to analyse that capital *truth* of all, THE FAITH, may possibly enable us to make.

I.

That ancient Remedy against Error, a *Pyrrhonian*, or, if you like it better, an *Academic* SCEPTICISM, only added one more disorder to the human Mind; but being the last of its misbegotten issue, it became as is usual, the favourite of its Parent.

Our blessed MASTER himself was the first to encounter its attacks, and the insolence of that School has kept the Church in breath ever since.

When Jesus was carried before Pilate as a Criminal of State, for calling himself *King of the Jews*, he tried to shorten the intended process by pleading that *his Kingdom was not of this World.* But Pilate, alarmed at the names of *king* and *kingdom*, asked, *Art thou a King then?* The other replied,—*For this cause came I into the World, that I should bear Witness unto the* TRUTH. *Pilate saith unto him,* WHAT IS TRUTH? *And when he had said this, he went out again**. For when he found that the *Kingdom* claimed by the supposed Criminal, was a *Kingdom* merely *Spiritual*, or, in the Roman Governor's conceit, a *Kingdom* only in idea, he considered the claim as no proper subject of the civil tribunal. So far he acted well, and suitably to his public Character. But when he discovered his indifference to, or rather contempt of, TRUTH, when offered to be laid before him as a private Man, by one who, he knew, had the repute of exercising every superior Power proper to enforce it, he appears, to me, in a light much less excusable.

The negligent air of his insulting question will hardly admit of an Apology.—" You tell me (says he) of " TRUTH, a word in the mouth of every Leader and " Follower of a SECT; who all agree (though in nothing " else) to give that name to their own Opinions: While " TRUTH, if, indeed, we allow of its existence, still " wanders at large, and in disguise. Nor does the De- " tection seem worth the Pains of the Search, since " those things which Nature intended for general use " she made plain and obvious, and within the reach of " all men."

* John xviii. 38.

Sentiments

Sentiments like these bespoke the Ruler of an Asiatic Province, who had heard so much of TRUTH in the Schools of Philosophy; and had heard of it to so little purpose. This corrupt Governor, therefore, finding a Jewish Sage talk of *bearing Witness to the Truth*, (the affected office of the Grecian Sophists), was ready to conclude that Jesus was one of their mimic Followers. For it was now become fashionable amongst the learned Rabbins to inlist themselves into one or other of those celebrated Schools. Thus the famous Philo was an outrageous PLATONIST: And Jesus calling himself a KING, together with the known Purity and Severity of his Morals, probably made Pilate consider him as one of the STOICAL *wise men*, who alone was free, and happy, and *a King*.

"Liber, honoratus, pulcher, REX denique Regum."

Now, as on the one hand, the Character of the Greek Philosophy, which was of an abstract nature, and sequestered from civil business, made Pilate conclude, that these Claims of Jesus had nothing in them dangerous or alarming; so, on the other hand, its endless disputes and quarrels about TRUTH, and which of the Sects had her in keeping, made Men of the World, and especially those in public Stations, whose practice declined the test of any moral System whatsoever, willing to be persuaded, and ready to conclude, that this boasted TRUTH, which pretended to be the sole Directress of human conduct, was indeed no better than a shifting and fantastic Vision.

This, I presume, was the light in which Pilate considered the SAVIOUR OF THE WORLD. Had he suspected Jesus of being the Founder of a public and a popular Religion, which aimed to be erected on the ruins of the established Worship, the jealousies of the Roman Court, since the loss of public liberty, had, doubtless, made this servile Minister of Power very attentive, and even officious, to suppress it in its birth.

But if the ill usage of TRUTH by the Philosophers could so disgust the Politician of old, as to indispose him to an acquaintance of this importance, what must we think will be her reception amongst modern Statesmen, whose views are neither more pure nor more generous; and whose penetration, perhaps, does not go much

beyond the busy men of Antiquity; when they see her so freely handled by those, amongst us, who call themselves her Ministers, and profess to consecrate her to the Service of Religion? Amongst such, I mean of the active no less than of the idle part of the fashionable World, Pilate's scornful question is become proverbial, when they would insinuate, that TRUTH, like *Virtue*, is nothing but a *name*.

What is this TRUTH, say they, of which the world has heard so much, and has received so little satisfaction? But above all, what is that GOSPEL TRUTH, the pretended Guide of life, which its Ministers are wont so much to discredit in their very attempts to recommend? For while *objections* to Religion lie level to the capacities of the Vulgar, the *solution* of them requires the utmost stretch of parts and learning in the Teacher to excogitate, and equal application and attention in the Learner to comprehend. From which (say they) we are naturally led to conclude, that the *Gospel doctrines* are no Truths, or at least, Truths of no general concern; since they are neither uniformly held by those who are employed to teach them, nor subject to the examination of such as are enjoined to receive them.

Something like this, I apprehend, may be the way of thinking and talking too, amongst those who have more decently discarded all care and concern about the Things of Religion.

And as our acquired passions and appetites have concurred with the constitutional weakness of our nature to form these conclusions against TRUTH, and especially against that best part of it, RELIGIOUS TRUTH, Charity seems to call upon us to detect and lay open the general causes which have given birth to Men's prejudices against it.

I. And first with regard to TRUTH in general;—of the various hindrances to its discovery, and of Men's backwardness to acquiesce in it, when luckily found.

The first and surest Means of acquiring the good we seek, is our love and affection for the object. This quickens our industry, and sharpens our attention. On this account the LOVE OF TRUTH hath always been recommended by the Masters of Wisdom as the best means of

of succeeding in the pursuit of it. Hardly any one suspects that he wants this Love: yet there are few whom their confidence does not deceive. We mistake the love of our *Opinions* for the *love of Truth*; because we suppose our own Opinions, *true*: Yet, for the most part, we received them upon trust; and consequently, they are much more likely to be false: So that our affections being now misplaced, they are a greater hindrance in the pursuit of TRUTH, than if we had no affections at all concerning it.

How then shall we know when we have this love? for still it is necessary we should have it, if we would search after TRUTH to any good purpose. It is difficult to describe what every man must feel for himself; and yet it is as dangerous to trust our own feelings, when the Object is so easily mistaken. However, when we set out in pursuit of TRUTH as of a Stranger; and not in search of Arguments to support our Acquaintance with preconceived Opinions: When we possess ourselves in a perfect indifference for every thing but known and well-attested TRUTH; regardless of the place from whence it comes, or of that to which it seems to be going: When the Mind, I say, is in this State, no one, I think, can fairly suspect the reality of its attachment.

1. But our APPETITES rarely suffer us to observe this strict and rigid conduct. We seek the gratification of our humour even in the Laws which should correct it. Hence so many various SYSTEMS OF MORALITY to suit every man's bent of Mind and frame of Constitution. The Indolent, the Active, the Sanguine, the Flegmatic, and the Saturnine, have all their correspondent Theories. And from thenceforth, the concern of each is not the *trial*, but the *support* of his Opinions; which can be no otherwise provided for than by keeping the arguments in favour of them always in view, and by contriving to have those of a less benign aspect overlooked or forgotten.

2. PREJUDICES mislead the Enquirer no less than his *passions*. He venerates the notions he received from his Forefathers: He rests in them on the authority of those whose judgment he esteems; or, at least, wishes well to them for the sake of the honours or profits he sees attached to the profession of them. Nay, he can persuade himself

self to patronize what he hath once chosen, for reasons with which TRUTH has no manner of concern. He likes them because they are *old*; because they are *new*; for being *plain and simple*; for being *sublime and mysterious*; for being followed by the *Few*; for being followed by the *Many*: in a word, on a thousand other accounts still more remote from the conclusions of common sense.

But then, bad as this is, since it is, at the same time, apparent, that the impediments in pursuit of TRUTH are not *essential*, but only *accidental* to the Inquiry, we may well account for our mistakes in setting out; for the slowness of our progress; and the rubs and oppositions we meet in our passage, without having recourse to any *sceptical* conclusions in favour of the incomprehensible *nature* of TRUTH, or the inaccessible *situation* in which the Author of all things hath been pleased to place her. For, is it any reason, that because some Truths are so deep that our haste and impatience will not allow us time to sound them; others so disguised that our dissipation will not enable us to unmask their pretences; and others again, so unfriendly to our prejudices as to indispose us to examine them: That, because some errors wear so plausible a face as to look like TRUTH; others, so commodious an appearance as to be readily received for TRUTH; and others again, so fashionable as to claim all the privileges due to TRUTH; is, I say, all, or any thing of this, a reason for sober men to conclude, that either there is no difference between *Truth* and *Falsehood*; or that the *difference* is so insensible that it will not serve us for a *distinction*? Our Senses, in many cases; our Reason, in more; and our very Hearts in almost all, will tell us the contrary.

II. Secondly, with regard to RELIGIOUS TRUTH.—1. Mistaken constancy, or more tenacious ZEAL, make some men prejudiced in favour of *less allowed* Opinions: and the obliquer affections of avarice or ambition make others declare for such as are *established*. OPPOSITION likewise will too much dispose Both, to support what they may even suspect to be false, and to secrete what they know to be true. This draws them still further from the road of TRUTH; while all they seek is to be at distance from one another's Parties and Opinions.

2. Inveterate

2. Inveterate errors, long since sanctified by Time and Authority, concerning the nature and end of SCRIPTURE, are another occasion of the disgraces to which *Revelation* is become subject.

GOD'S WRITTEN WORD is so commonly and so justly honoured with the name of THE TRUTH; and holy Writ in general so frequently recommended for its virtue in *leading us into all Truth*, that simple, well-meaning men have been apt to regard it as a Treasury of Science; and to apply to it for all the principles of human knowledge. How wretchedly, for instance, hath the Mosaic account of the Creation been dishonoured, by the wild and fanciful expositions of men besotted by this or that Sect of heathen PHILOSOPHY, or of Christian MYSTICISM! Platonists, Materialists, Cartesians, Chimists, Cabalists, and all the impure Fry of Physical, Philological, and Spiritual Enthusiasts, have found each his own whimsies realized in the first and second chapters of the Book of Genesis.

Again, how impiously have the JEWISH LAW and the GOSPEL OF JESUS been abused by Slaves and Sycophants, to find, in one, the DIVINE RIGHT of KINGS; and, in the other, the SUPREME DOMINION OF THE CHURCH.

But amidst all this folly and mischief, arising from a perversion of the BIBLE, to support human Systems of Philosophy and Politics, had men only reflected, that though the Bible tells us, it was *written to make men wise*—it addeth—*unto salvation**, they would have sought for the Principles of *natural* and *civil* knowledge amongst their proper Professors; and have studied Scripture only to investigate that WISDOM *which is from above, and is first* PURE, then PEACEABLE†. A *wisdom* which, at the same time that it rectifies the understanding, purifies the heart; and so removes all ground of contention raised by a perplexed head or a heated temper.

The first Propagators of our holy FAITH, under the immediate Commission of their Master, were, in this, as in all other parts of their conduct, truly admirable. What they chiefly proposed to the People at large, was the BELIEF of a few clear and simple propositions, as *neces-*

* 2 Tim. iii. 15. † James iii. 17.

sary

sary to Salvation: When they addressed themselves to those chosen Particulars, who were fitly qualified and rightly disposed, they as warmly recommend EXAMINATION:—to *Search the Scriptures* *, and *to try all things*.

Yet the only use a late Writer † could find in so sage and generous a conduct, was to abuse it, in a profane piece of drollery, under the form of a serious question, *Whether Christianity was founded in Argument or in Faith?* which, however designed for Wit, was just as wise as, *Whether* St. Paul's Clock was constructed on MECHANISM or on MOTION? Since, if the Clock was seen to have *motion*, we could not but conclude that the *motion* arose from *mechanism*. So, if the vital principle of Christianity be FAITH, it can be no other than such a *Faith* as stands upon *Reason*, and is supported by *Argument*. A wild Indian, perhaps, might fancy that St. Paul's Clock was animated, and put in motion by a Spirit: And an Enthusiast, still wilder than the Savage, may say that *Faith is but the Seal of a supernatural impression*. Yet surely, none but a Fool of the *old* stamp, or a Fanatic of the *new*, would be willing to discard REASON, in pursuit of his *future* happiness, when he has already found IT so useful in procuring his *present*. For both present and future Good are, alike, acquired by the proper adaption of *means* to *ends*. An operation which, all must confess, the Aid of REASON only can effectually perform. Nor hath this faithful Guide of life ever afforded cause of complaint or jealousy. When men, who profess to be under HER guidance, find themselves bewildered, they should suspect, not HER, but themselves. And, on a fair examination, I suppose, they will always find, that they have been *directing* REASON when they should have been *directed* by HER. But the wayward Affections which occasion her discredit, go on in their illusions to excite our distrust.

II.

Thus much for SCEPTICISM, that bane of human Science, which, while it boasts to be the NERVES OF THE MIND ‡, deprives it of all its force and vigour. I now

* John v. 39. † Dodwell.

‡ —— ἄρβεσα ταῦτα τῶν φρενῶν. Epicharmus.

proceed

proceed to consider the temper and disposition necessary to be acquired by us, before we can safely and profitably employ the AIDS OF REASON to explain the TRUTHS OF REVELATION.

The greatest impediment to Men's advancement in the knowledge of the nature and genius of the CHRISTIAN RELIGION, hath ever been their adopting or espousing some favourite HYPOTHESIS, whereon to erect the *Gospel System.* For every dispensation of true Religion, consisting of *means* and *end,* the well-adapting these to each other, produceth what we call a SYSTEM.

Now this may be built either on an HYPOTHESIS, which is a *supposed* truth, or on a FACT, which is a *real* one. And the Systems of Theology have, for the most part, been unwarily framed on the former model; which, as we say, have much entangled and perplexed our searches after Truth.

Into this mistake men easily fell by injudiciously applying, to the SYSTEM OF GRACE, the method which Philosophers invented, when they set upon explaining the SYSTEM OF NATURE.

They did not consider that any plausible Hypothesis in Physics hath its use, as it serves to shew from what Laws the natural Phænomena *may* arise. Nor is it destitute of more particular uses; thus the *Ptolemaic Hypothesis* enables Astronomers to predict Eclipses as well as the *Copernican Theory.*

But a mere Hypothesis, to explain *the Dispensation of Grace,* is not only useless, but often, hurtful.

The reason is apparent. It is agreed by all sober and intelligent Naturalists, that God is the Author of the *Material System:* But it is the great question in debate between Religionists and Unbelievers, Whether God be indeed the Author of the *System of Grace.*

At worst, therefore, a false Hypothesis in Physics only keeps hid, or leaves unexplained, the chief beauties of the *Material Creation:* And the disgrace, to which this method is subject, falls only upon the successless Inquirer; because every such false or fanciful Hypothesis carries along with it, even in the very arguments for its support, the Conviction of its falsehood. But a groundless Hypothesis, in *religious* matters, by affording (and it

can

can afford no other) an unfavourable representation of the moral Attributes of God (his *Goodness* and his *Justice*) becomes a fatal discredit to the Doctrine of *Redemption*.

Yet, at the same time, it is but *just* to observe, that such is the fate and condition of sublunary things, that these sometimes exchange their proper qualities, and produce effects not correspondent to their respective natures.

Thus in the case as thus considered, we have shewn how harmless a mere hypothesis in Physics generally is; and, on the contrary, how one in Religion is as generally pernicious. Yet sometimes we shall find the *Physical* Hypothesis to be hurtful, and the *Religious* useful.

The *Ptolemaic* System, by destroying all that simplicity of *motion* to be expected in these Works of God, hath, along with its civil and practical use, occasioned a speculative mischief; and inclined men to Atheism; as appears in the case of Alphonsus, who impiously boasted, that, had he been consulted about the Solar System, he could have advised how it might have been better constructed. I call it an *impious* boast, because it plainly insinuated, that he (who had discovered the imperfections of the Ptolemaic Construction, and was ignorant of the true) ascribed the whole to a *blind and unintelligent Cause*. Again, the *Cartesian*, with his Corpuscularian Hypothesis, attempts to explain all the Phænomena of Nature by *matter and motion*; requiring only that God should at first create a sufficient quantity of each, just enough to set him on work, and then pretends to do the business without his further aid; that is, without the concourse of any VITAL PRINCIPLE to help him forward, in an immaterial way; this *Hypothesis*, I say, which, on the one hand, so much contributed to free Philosophy from the nonsense and tyranny of the SCHOOLS, yet, on the other, produced (while it was in vogue) many rank and irreligious *Materialists*.

But once more turn the tables, and then, so shifting in this state of things, we shall see, although we have shewn that, in the heights and purer regions of Theology, a *mere hypothesis* is likely to disturb and perplex our views, yet there is an inferior station in that service, where the Divine may employ this counterfeit of a true Theory to very good purpose; in discrediting such objections to Revela-

tion as have gained credit by our imperfect ideas of the true System of the *intellectual World*. Here a probable hypothesis is of use, as it may serve to convince objectors, that what we find recorded in Sacred Scripture of the Origin and Progress of God's extraordinary Dispensation to Man, may be very consistent with what human Reason teacheth of the divine Essence and Attributes. And the more we can frame of those probable Solutions, the more support we give to *Revelation*, though it be only by arguments *ad ignorantiam*.

Notwithstanding all this, it appears, upon the whole, that a successful Search after Religious Truths can be then only expected when we erect our System upon FACT; acknowledged *Facts*, as they are recorded in Sacred Scripture.

For if the Dispensation, to which such Facts belong, be indeed from God, all the Parts of it will be seen to be the correspondent Members of one entire WHOLE; which orderly disposition of things, essential to a religious SYSTEM, will assure us of the TRUE THEORY of the Christian Faith.

But the *abuse of Words*, confounding those of HYPOTHESIS and SYSTEM with one another (the word *System* being a common term, which may be applied equally to an *Hypothesis* or a *true Theory*) hath thrown a discredit on the latter, with which the former only is chargeable. Examples of this the attentive Reader may find among the numberless Cavils to the Work of *The Divine Legation*.

Hitherto we have endeavoured to shew in what way HUMAN REASON should be employed on religious matters.—But then, how far, when thus employed, She is to be *indulged*, is the next thing to be considered.

The three moral Attributes of the Godhead, discoverable by natural Light, on which men are accustomed to examine the pretensions of *Revelation*, are his JUSTICE, his GOODNESS, and his WISDOM. But the Reasoner on Religion will transgress his bounds, unless he confine himself within the *two first*. The evidence of this assertion is convincing.

To form a right judgement of the divine Attributes of JUSTICE and GOODNESS, the only *relations*, to be taken into

into consideration, are those of GOD and MAN. But to judge truly of the WISDOM of the Godhead, other *relations* besides those of God and Man, namely, the whole order of intellectual Beings, dispersed throughout the universe, are to be added to the account: Of whom, further than of their mere existence, we know nothing.

From hence it is seen, that we may safely determine, whether any thing in REVELATION contradict God's JUSTICE and GOODNESS. If it doth, such Revelation is to be rejected. Not so, with regard to his WISDOM, therein manifested in any particular instance; although our natural knowledge of the Being and Attributes of God assures us, that the GREAT ALL is conducted with the most consummate *Wisdom*.

REVELATION therefore is not to be rejected on account of difficulties arising from our ignorance of *all the relations* necessary to be taken in, when we would attempt to form a complete judgment of the exertion of the *Attribute of Wisdom*.

Why this precise mode of REDEMPTION *by the death and sufferings of Christ* was preferred to all other, in the eternal purpose of the Godhead, exceeds the powers of human reason to discover; because his Attribute of WISDOM, which is out of the reach of man to apply to this inquiry, is here concerned. But when it hath been proved by *Fact*, that a Religion was revealed in which *this mode of Redemption* is employed, then Reason may lend her modest aid to shew (what a *rational Religion* seems to expect should be shewn) that *this precise mode* is conformable to all our ideas of divine *goodness* and *justice*: Nay, that it best quadrates with, as it is seen to be the properest means of, a RESTORATION TO A FREE GIFT, WHEN BECOME FORFEITED.

This difference, in the Application of Reason to religious matters, MOSES hath not obscurely intimated to his People; where, in his last direction for their conduct, he says, *The* SECRET THINGS *belong unto the* LORD *our* GOD; *but those things which are* REVEALED *belong to* US *and to* OUR CHILDREN, *for ever* *; and had I not observed this sage direction, but vainly endeavoured to explain Mysteries which the Gospel hath left unexplained,

* Deut. xxix. 29.

I should

I should justly have incurred the Censure of Jerom to his Adversaries, *Why* (says this *Father*) *do you pretend, after so many ages are elapsed, to teach us what was never taught before! Why, attempt to* EXPLAIN *what neither* PETER *nor* PAUL *thought it necessary to be known*?*

1. The Principles, here laid down, may be of use, First, to direct future Enquirers in the RIGHT WAY; where, if, on other accounts, they make but slow advances, they are, at least, kept from wandering in the dark. For while the bounds of *Reason* continue unsettled, and the use and abuse of this noble instrument of Truth remain confounded with one another, the very ablest Seeker will be embarrassed and misled †. Hence it hath come to pass, that this first and necessary step in support of our holy Faith, AN INQUIRY INTO THE TRUE NATURE AND GENIUS OF THE GOSPEL-DISPENSATIONS, hath been so generally overlooked: instead of which a thousand metaphysical subtilties on the *terms* and *phrases* under which the doctrine of SAVING GRACE is conveyed, have engaged men's principal attention; while the thing itself, a matter of the utmost importance, hath been suffered to lie in all the Obscurity in which old Polemics had involved it. So true hath our perverse nature ever been to itself. "Hoc habet ingenium humanum," (says the great Philosopher) "ut cum ad SOLIDA non sufficiat, "in SUPERVACANEIS se atterat ‡."

2. Another use of these Principles is to convince Unbelievers, that REVEALED RELIGION affords, and is productive of, all the evidence which the nature of the thing requires; and consequently, all which right reason can expect: And that the strongest of their objections to it arise from the abusive exercise of our Faculties, employed on objects which those Faculties can neither apprehend nor reach.

III.

But now, all PARTIES, in support of their oblique interests, have concurred to decry *this method of Inquiry*; whereby, from the various genius, the comparative excellence, the mutual dependence, the reciprocal illustration

* —*Ad Pammachium & Occanum de erroribus Origenis.*

† Limborch's *Amica collatio cum erudito Judæo.* ‡ Bacon.

of the several parts of God's moral Dispensation to Mankind, and the gradual progress of the Whole towards perfection, great discoveries have been made in these latter times, by men who dared to break the barrier, which Bigotry and Superstition had been so long forming, to obstruct our views both of NATURE and of GRACE.

These PARTIES ask, How it happened that *Discoveries* so sublime and useful, as is pretended, were *now* to make; when the *light of the Spirit* was sent so early, and had illuminated the Church so long?—How it happened, that these Truths were denied to the best times, and, after lying hid for many ages, were reserved for the reward of the very worst? And then in their real or pretended reverence for *Establishments*, concur in condemning all EXPERIMENTS IN RELIGION.

To these, under their sad suspicions of the issue, in forsaking the OLD POSTURE OF DEFENCE, it will be sufficient to reply,

1. That the promise and gift of the *Holy Spirit* may be considered, either as they referred to the first Propagators of the Faith, or as they concerned the Teachers of it, ever since.

As to the first Propagators, there is no doubt of their being abundantly enlightened for the work of their Ministry; whether it was in making Converts, in founding Churches, or in composing those occasional instructions, by which the Faithful, in all ages, may improve the current benefits of the same Spirit. As to the succeeding Teachers of the word, the assistance they receive from the HOLY SPIRIT, is the second point we are more particularly to consider.

Now the endowment of GRACE is, in this respect, pretty much the same with the endowment of NATURE; of little advantage to the receiver without his co-operation. God hath bestowed upon us hands and feet, to procure good, and to avert evil; but it is to the careful and habitual application of these members to their proper uses, that we owe all the benefits they are capable of producing. So it is with the free gift of the *Spirit*. It is bestowed upon us, to enlighten the understanding, and to redress the disorders of the Will. But it does not work

work like a *Charm:* for if either we *neglect to employ* these given powers, or *will divert* them to improper subjects, the use and efficacy of *Grace* must certainly be defeated.

This Ordinance in the economy of GRACE, may receive credit from what is seen to have happened in the economy of NATURE. The power, wisdom, and goodness of the Almighty is so evident and convincing, from every obvious configuration of matter surrounding us, that these Attributes cannot escape the most inattentive, or lie concealed from the most short-sighted. Hence a GOD, the Maker, the Preserver, and Governor of the World, is the universal voice of Nature.

NOW CREATION and GOVERNMENT, from whence the *morality* of human Actions is deduced, are the foundation of NATURAL RELIGION: so that GOD cannot be said to have been wanting in the discovery of himself to the lowest of his rational Creatures: Yet, though the general and obvious marks of his *power*, *wisdom*, and *goodness*, obtrude themselves upon all men, it is nevertheless certain that a well-directed study of the Book of Nature opens to us such stupendous wonders of his *Power*, such awful Scenes of his *Wisdom*, and such enchanting prospects of his *Goodness*, as far exceed all conception of the unlearned and uninstructed Beholder. Some faint taste of these delights the more inquisitive enjoyed very early: But those who came after, by indulging too much to abstract SPECULATION, and trusting too little to EXPERIMENT, instead of discovering a *real world*, the Archetype of its Maker, invented a variety of *imaginary* ones; all as dishonourable, as they were unrelated to him. At length, two of our own countrymen of superior genius chalked out a different road to the study of Nature, in which vague conjecture was excluded; and *facts*, verified on *experiments*, were allowed to be the only inlet to physical knowledge. Henceforth, NATURE was set before us, unveiled; and her Sacred Mysteries held out to the knowledge and admiration of all men.

This was the progress in the ways of NATURE: The ways of GRACE ran the very same fortune.

The great Principles of *revealed Religion* are FAITH and OBEDIENCE. These, which are alone sufficient *to*

make men wise unto Salvation, are clearly and fully taught in the *Gospel*. But we should greatly derogate from God's *moral Government*, did we not allow it to abound in the like sublime Wonders with the *Natural*. And to the study of the first, there are more important Calls, and much greater Advantages. The knowledge of God's *moral Government*, as far as concerns his religious Dispensations, is the duty of every man: and, indeed, the whole business of the Ministers of his *revealed word*. So that partly, for the use and importance of the subject, partly, for the necessity of making head against the Enemies of Revelation, but chiefly in obedience to the Command, TO STUDY THE SCRIPTURES, it hath, from the first ages of the Church to the present times, been one of the principal occupations of the Learned. Yet what, from unfavourable circumstances in the *civil* and *literary* world; what, from the varying bias of occasional prejudices; but, above all, from the sordid interests and blind passions of men occupied in these Inquiries; the various Schemes of Religion, pretended to be found in *Scripture*, but indeed, the workmanship of *Divines*, had dishonoured the Doctrine of REDEMPTION near as much as the hypothesis of *Philosophers* had dishonoured the History of the CREATION. Till here again, as in the former case, the same caution and sobriety which directed men to the true method of treating *things material*, by a careful study of the volume of NATURE, led them into the right way of explaining *things spiritual*, by a careful study of the volume of GRACE. So that if, in these times, the advances in the knowledge of God's WILL should haply prove as considerable as those in the discovery of his WORKS, it will not be beside a reasonable expectation; as similar causes are wont to produce similar effects.

I have placed these correspondent accounts of the progress of the human faculties, in NATURE and in GRACE, in this neighbourly position, that the Reader, by setting them together, and comparing them with one another, may see, whether there be any Objections to NEW DISCOVERIES in *Religion*, which do not equally hold against NEW DISCOVERIES in *Nature*; of which, for their *newness* alone, no one ever yet entertained the least doubt or suspicion of their TRUTH.

For

For let us compare the Almighty's *display of his nature* in the great Volume of his WORKS, with *the declaration of his Will* in the lesser Volume of his WORD, and we shall find the same marks of GOODNESS to be alike conspicuous in both cases.

In his *Works*, a man need but open his Eyes to see in every Object, the God which claims his adoration: In his *Word*, the Man, who *runs*, *may read*, the Means and Method of his own Salvation. In neither case, is any thing wanting to instruct the most simple in their dependence and their duty; in which, consists their *happiness*.—For further information in the works and ways of Providence, God wisely reserved it for the reward of the manly and virtuous improvement of the human faculties.

It is true in fact, as hath been already intimated, that throughout a long series of Ages, neither of these Inquirers made any very considerable Advances in REAL KNOWLEDGE. But it is as true, that what hindered Both, proceeded not so much from difficulties in the things sought after, as from the wrong Methods employed in the search. For, instead of addressing themselves to discover the *true Constitution* of Things from the Frame of God's works, as objected to their Senses; or the *true End* of Revelation from Sacred Scripture, as it there lies open to their Contemplation, they framed fanciful hypotheses, out of their own slender stock of ideas; and then, by distorting Nature, and wresting the Bible awry, they forced both one and the other, to Father their own blind and spurious Issue.

But when once DIVINES and PHILOSOPHERS were become sensible of their wrong Courses; and, in consequence of that conviction, had measured back their steps; and with more modesty and better sense had renounced their fancies, and erected Theories on the real constitution of things; it is wonderful to conceive what discoveries were soon made in *Natural* and *Religious* Truths.

THESE TWO IMPORTANT STUDIES, therefore, being alike circumstanced, and having run the same fortune, demand, in all reasonable allowance, the same judgment to be passed on their pretences.

But Men are not accustomed to be thus equitable. One of the readiest, as well as most impudent exploits of

of Prejudice, is to draw *unlike* conclusions from *similar* Premisses.

It is confessed, that the book of Nature is so plain and clear, that every Sentence reveals and proclaims its Almighty Author: that if its more sublime or more profound truths have lain concealed, or been kept out of sight, for Ages, it was the fault of the Inquirers, who adhered so long to a perverse method of studying Nature: for that, as soon as ever they began to seek a better, and to prosecute it with care and sobriety, KNOWLEDGE suddenly opened and enlarged its Empire; while the blaze of light which accompanied its progress, was so far from making Truth suspected for the newness of its Splendour, that it dissipated all those doubts which had been entertained of its obscure nature, and equivocal Claims and Prerogatives.

But now, if we turn from the *Physical* to the *Moral* state of things, we shall find, Men have drawn different inferences from similar cases.—Because, in their search after the higher Truths of Religion, they had been long unsuccessful, they not only took umbrage at these now found, and, like some jewels, found too by their own surrounding light, but conceived fresh doubts even of the most obvious principles which led to these late discoveries.

2. There is, yet, another sort of Believers (and this brings me to the second part of the Objection) who, from too great a reverence for things established, join with such as have too little, in decrying all NOVELTIES in religious Matters. These men, in abhorrence of the Vanity of being wiser than their Fathers, have in express terms denounced their displeasure against MAKING what they call, EXPERIMENTS IN RELIGION.

This is strange language in a Country of Liberty; and stranger still, in an Age of Reason. DIVINES, it is true, have long disputed *how experiments in Religion should be made!* Some would depend on *Scripture* alone; others were for taking in, *Fathers and Councils*; a third sort, for adding *Tradition* to the process; and a fourth, for applying *raillery and ridicule* to quicken the operation. So that, ever since the fall of Monkery, all were for *making some Experiment or other*. For what is *making* sober *experiments*, but (as hath been shewn)

supporting

supporting and illustrating REVELATION by new Arguments, furnished by new *Discoveries* made in the Order, Fitness, and Harmony of God's various Dispensations of Religion amongst themselves, and with one another; just as PHILOSOPHERS (from whom the Word is borrowed, and we see how unluckily) unfold Nature by new discoveries, made from repeated trials on the obvious qualities and hidden Contents of Material Substances.

No experiments in Religion is indeed the civil cant of POLITICIANS; for *Bigotry* and *State-craft* often meet; as extremes easily run into one another by the very attempt to keep them at a distance. This, as I say, is one of the fundamental Articles of the Statesman's Creed. For Religion being useful to Society; and yet, in his Opinion, only a well-invented Fiction, all *experiments*, that is, all strict inquiries into its Nature, cannot but tend to weaken, rather than support, this useful Ally of Civil Government. But for a man, who believes Religion to have come, and in an extraordinary manner, from God, to be alarmed with the danger of *experiments*, as if Truth would not bear to be seen on all Sides, is the most ridiculous of all panic terrors. Might we not reasonably ask such a one, How it comes to pass, that *Experiments*, which are of so sovereign use in the knowledge of *Nature*, should be calculated to make such havoc in the study of *Religion?* Are not Nature and Religion both the Offspring of God? Were not both given for human Contemplation? Have not both (as proceeding from the dark Recesses of his Throne) their depths and obscurities? And doth not the unfolding the Mysteries of his *moral Government* tend equally, with the displaying the Secrets of his *natural*, to the advancement of his glory, and the happiness of Mankind?

In a word, Had *no experiments been made in Nature*, we had still slept in the shade, or been kept entangled in the barren and thorny paths of SCHOOL PHILOSOPHY; and had *no experiments been made in Religion*, we had still kept blundering on in the dark and rugged Wilds of SCHOOL DIVINITY.

To conclude therefore, and in the words of our great Philosopher—"Let no man, *upon a weak conceit of* "*sobriety*, or an ill-applied *moderation*, think or main-

" tain, that a man can search too far, or be too well " studied in THE BOOK OF GOD'S WORD, or in the " book of GOD'S WORKS; but rather let Men endeavour " AN ENDLESS PROGRESS OR PROFICIENCE IN BOTH! " only let them beware that they apply both to CHARITY; " and not to swelling; to USE, and not to ostentation; " and again, that they do not UNWISELY MINGLE OR " CONFOUND THESE LEARNINGS TOGETHER*."

* BACON, *Advancement of Learning*, lib. i.—Could we suppose the divinity of Bacon's Genius to have been such as that he foresaw the miserable havoc which a late Cabalistic Crew have made both of the WORKS and WORD of God by this impure and unnatural mixture, we can hardly conceive words more expressive, or a warning more awakening, than what is here contained in this caution against all such blind Workers in dirt and darkness.

THE

DIVINE LEGATION OF MOSES

DEMONSTRATED.

BOOK IX.

CHAP. I.

I BEGAN this Work by an ARGUMENT (long since completed) to prove that A FUTURE STATE OF REWARDS AND PUNISHMENTS was not taught by Moses; but that, in its stead, *an equal or extraordinary Providence* was the Sanction of the LAW. And I now conclude it, with a corroboration of that ARGUMENT, by shewing, that *life and immortality was brought to light by the* GOSPEL alone.

From whence results this further Truth, That were MOSES and the PROPHETS the commissioned Servants of God, THEY COULD NOT, by their office, TEACH A FUTURE STATE; since it was ordained, and reserved for, the Ministry of JESUS.

Besides, What the LAW promised was to be obtained by WORKS. What the GOSPEL *brought to light*, under the name of *Salvation*, is to be procured by FAITH in a crucified Saviour and Redeemer. From these Truths will arise another proof of the *Divinity*, both of the LAW and the GOSPEL.

But as all this can be shewn no otherwise, than by a distinct and collective view of the whole of God's moral Dispensation to Man, commencing with ADAM, and completed in JESUS CHRIST, I have made the NATURE AND GENIUS OF THE GOSPEL the subject of the Ninth and last Book of the DIVINE LEGATION.

Of

Of the two immediately foregoing, namely, the Seventh and the Eighth Books *, the first of them is employed in supporting the MAJOR and the MINOR propositions of the first Syllogism: by a continued history of the Religious Opinions of the Jewish People, on this matter, from the time of their earliest Prophets (who gave some dark intimations of a different dispensation), to the time of the *Maccabees*, when the Doctrine of a FUTURE STATE of rewards and punishments was become National.

The other, namely the Eighth Book, is employed in supporting the MAJOR and the MINOR propositions of the second Syllogism; in which is considered the PERSONAL CHARACTER OF MOSES, and the GENIUS OF HIS LAW, so far forth as it concerns, or has a relation to *the Character of the* LAWGIVER.

As the main Argument of all the foregoing Books, of THE NATURE AND GENIUS OF THE LAW, has been hitherto esteemed too Paradoxical; the Argument of this last, concerning THE NATURE AND GENIUS OF THE GOSPEL, it is more than probable, may be condemned, and by the same men, as being too *Orthodoxical:* For I have, long since, observed, that a religious Notion is apt to change its nature in the estimation of certain Divines, when it changes its Advocate.

Were I concerned with none but UNBELIEVERS, in this present Discourse, my only task, and a short one too, would be to prove the *reasonableness* of these which I hold to be the essential Doctrines of Christianity; for *Unbelievers* confess they are to be found in the *Gospel*, but deny them to be of divine Original, on account of the supposed absurdities which attend them; in the same manner that they have allowed the Doctrine of a *future state* not to be found in the LAW; and therefore denied that Dispensation to be given by God, because such an omission, they pretend, makes it unworthy of him. This, I say, had been a labour both short and easy, had I not to do, likewise, with a sort of BELIEVERS, who, as they held that the doctrine of a *future state* made part of the MOSAIC RELIGION, because they think the honour of the LAW requires that it should be found there; so, with the same spirit, they deny that the Doctrine of *Salvation*

* See p. 144 of this Volume.

in

in a Redeemer, by Faith alone, makes a part of the CHRISTIAN RELIGION, because, they think, the honour of the GOSPEL requires that it should not be found there.

Enough hath been urged, in the course of the main Argument, against the *first* of these perversities: the *second* will detain us longer than such plain truths seem to require: because the attempt to shew the *reasonableness* of these which we call the essential Doctrines of Christianity, will be deemed immature, till we have established very clear and circumstantial evidence of their real existence in the SYSTEM: for laboured Discourses have been written to prove that FAITH ALONE includes WORKS; and that REDEMPTION, according to the *Scripture Doctrine* of it, excludes a REDEEMER.

I am therefore, first of all, to prove the EXISTENCE of these Doctrines; and then, the REASONABLENESS of them. In doing which, I cannot but esteem it a *favourable circumstance*, if not a *happy omen*, that the very arguments employed to evince the *existence* of the Doctrines, do, at the same time, serve equally to shew the *reasonableness* of them.

A JOVE PRINCIPIUM was the formulary of ancient Piety and Wisdom, which served to introduce what the Sage had to deliver, of more than ordinary importance, for the instruction of Mankind. But here, the very nature of our present Argument will, of necessity, lead us up to the FIRST CAUSE, the Author of all Being.

For, without beginning at the CREATION, our view of these things would be narrow and obscure; and human judgment not sufficiently informed to enable it to conclude, with any degree of certainty, concerning a REVELATION, which is the completion of one great Moral System, the principles of which were laid in the disobedience of our first Parents.

In this Inquiry, as in all that have gone before, *our desire is, not to be carried up and down with the Waves of uncertain Arguments* (to use the words of a great Master of Reason), *but rather positively to lead on the Minds of the simpler Sort, by plain and easy degrees, till* THE VERY NATURE OF THE THING ITSELF DO MAKE MANIFEST WHAT IS TRUTH*.

* Hooker's Eccl. Polity.

Moses,

Moses, in the account he gives of the CREATION, expressly tells us, that MAN, or the human species, was the *Work* of the SIXTH DAY.---" So God created Man in " his own Image; in the Image of God created he him; " MALE AND FEMALE CREATED HE THEM. And God " blessed THEM, and God said unto THEM, be fruitful and " multiply and *replenish the Earth*, and have Dominion " over—every living thing that moveth upon the Earth. " And God said, behold I have given you every herb bear- " ing seed which is upon the face of the Earth, and *every* " *Tree*, in which is the fruit of a Tree yielding seed, *to you* " *it shall be for meat.*—And the evening and the morning " were the SIXTH DAY*." Yet, because the formation of WOMAN, from the side of MAN, was not *circumstantially* related till after the account of God's placing Man in PARADISE†, both Jews and Christians ‡ have generally concurred in one Opinion, that EVE was not *created* till ADAM was put into possession of the Garden of Eden; for they took it for granted, that Moses (though in a Moral or Religious history of the *Creation and Fall of Man*) had observed a Chronologic Order.

The very absurdity of this Opinion renders the mistake so apparent, that the Reader should not have been troubled with a formal confutation of it, did not the right stating of the fact (so inconsiderable, as on first sight it may be thought) serve to confirm a Truth, which hath been generally overlooked, though of the utmost importance towards our obtaining a just idea of *Revealed Religion*; as will be seen in the course of this inquiry.

1. First, therefore, let it be observed, that *Eve* could not be created in the *Garden*; since we are expressly told, that she was created along with Adam, some time before, namely, on the *sixth day.—Male and female created he them.*—A declaration so decisive, that the Rabbins, who will needs have *Eve* completely formed in

* Gen. i. 27—31. † Gen. ii. 8—21—22.

‡ Le Clerc says—l'Ecriture nous apprend formellement qu'Adam donna les noms aux animaux, entre lesquels, il n'en trouvoit aucun pour l'assister; *apres quoi Dieu* CREA *la Femme* de l'une des côtés de l'Homme. *Sentimens de quelques Theol.* p. 423.—Dr. Z. Pearce, in his Notes on Milton against Bentley, p. 233. And Hooker, in his Eccl. Pol. Book V. Sect. 73. *Woman was even in her first Estate framed by nature not only* AFTER IN TIME, *but inferior in excellencie.*

Paradise,

Paradise, gathered from the Words—*Male and Female*, (used by the historian, where he speaks of the Creation of the *sixth Day*) that *Adam* was an *Androgune*, a double Animal, or *Man-Woman*, joined side to side *; and that the operation of disjoining them was performed in the *Garden*; where indeed Jesus tells us, not a *separation*, but a *closer union* commenced.

2. When Moses gives us the Book *of the generations of Adam* †, he repeats what he had delivered before, that man was created male and female.—*Male and female created he them*, AND CALLED THEIR NAME ADAM, IN THE DAY WHEN THEY WERE CREATED ‡. Adam was the common name for man and woman; and that name was given them when the *Male* was created; consequently the *female* was created with him.

3. On the other hand, the same kind of reasoning which concludes, that the *Woman* was not created till after the *sixth day*, will conclude, that the *man* himself was not created till after that day: for, if we suppose the History of the Creation observes a strict chronologic Order, he was not created till after the *seventh day:* the sacred Writer, immediately after recording the WORK of the *six days* and the REST of the *seventh*, proceeds thus, *And the Lord formed man of the dust of the Ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and man became a living soul* §. Then follows the story of his

* This Jewish interpretation of the text appears to have been very ancient: and to have come early to the knowledge of the Heathen-World. *Plato*, in his *Symposium*, brings in one Aristophanes saying, that the ancient nature of man was not as we find it at present, but very different. He was originally Ανδρογυνος, a *man-woman*.—This fancy affords occasion to a pretty Fable, perhaps of the Philosopher's own invention, that these Ανδρογυνοι were a kind of double-animal, joined back to back. But that Jupiter, when he set them agoing in the World, slit every one of them, and then shuffling the separated parts well together, committed them to their fortune: and the employment of each of them being to find out its partner, the business of life was an incessant search of every one for its *better half*, in order to be rejoined in a more commodious manner. This, says the Philosopher, is the true origin of *Love*. † Gen. v. ‡ Ver. 2.

§ Gen. ii. 7. *Philo*, misled by the common error, that a chronological order was observed in the history of the *Creation*, concluded that the *Adam*, created in the Image of God, Gen. i. 27. was a different man from him who was *formed of the dust of the Ground*, Gen. ii. 7.

being

being put into paradise—of his deep sleep—of the Woman formed from his side. If, to this argument, so similar in all its parts, it be replied, that the direct assertion of Man's creation on the *sixth day* is alone sufficient to prove that the after mention of his *formation from the dust of the Ground* is but a repetition of, with an addition to, the first account; by which alone the TIME of Man's creation is to be determined: if, I say, this be replied, I shall take the benefit of the Answer, in favour of what I have assigned for the *time* of *Eve*'s creation, where I consider the account of her *formation from the Rib*, just in the same light that the Objector sees Adam's formation *from the dust of the Ground*; that is to say, as a repetition only (with other circumstances added) of what the Historian had before told us, of Eve's creation on the *sixth day*, in these words—MALE *and* FEMALE *created he them**.

But further, on a supposition of a Chronological Order in the relation, we shall be forced to conclude, not only that *Eve* was created in Paradise, but that she was not created till AFTER *the command was given not to eat of the Tree of Knowledge of good and evil*; for the *command* is found in the seventeenth verse of this Chapter, and her *formation from the Rib*, not till we come to the twenty-second verse: consequently, the prohibition did not bind or affect Eve. Yet she tells the Serpent (and sure she did not pay him in his own coin) that this prohibition equally concerned both her and Adam.—WE *may eat of the fruit of the trees of the Garden; but of the Tree which is in the midst of the Garden, God hath said,* YE *shall not eat of it*†. And accordingly, sentence is pronounced by God upon *her* trangression, as well as upon *his*‡.

5. But lastly, to cut the matter short, the Historian expressly tells us, that God *finished the work of creation in six days, and rested the seventh day from all his work which he had made*§. *Eve*, therefore, must needs have been created with *Adam* on the SIXTH DAY.

Two points then, only remain to be considered. 1. Why *Moses thought* it expedient to give so very particular a relation of *Eve's formation from the Rib?* 2. And why

* Gen. i. 27. † Ch. iii. 2, 3. ‡ Ch. iii. 13—16. § Ch. ii. 2.

he

he did not chuse to relate this circumstance in the place where he mentions her *Creation on the sixth day?*

1. The account of Eve's formation from the *Rib* was, without doubt, given, to inform us, that the UNION of the two Sexes, for the propagation of their kind, was of a nature more noble and sublime than the *consorting* of other Animals, who were all equally bid, like *Man*, to *increase and multiply*. For as the Poet says,

" Not Man alone, but all that roam the Wood,
" Or wing the Sky, or roll along the flood,
" Each loves itself, but not itself alone,
" Each sex desires alike."——

Thus far the common appetite impels; and Man and Beasts are equally subject to this second Law of Earthly Beings. But, from henceforth, it becomes, in MAN, a very superior Passion.

——" The Young dismiss'd, to wander Earth or Air;
" There stops the Instinct, and there ends the Care:
" A longer care MAN's helpless kind demands:
" That longer care contracts more lasting bands:
" REFLECTION, REASON still the ties improve;
" At once extend the interest and the love."

Now as REVELATION was given us (amongst other purposes more peculiar, indeed, and important) to support and strengthen the Operations of *Reflection* and the Conclusions of *Reason*, what could better serve the general design, while these were improving for the good of the Offspring, than to instruct us in this closer relation between the Parents, which arose from a personal Union, prior to that of reciprocal fondness?

But the Historian still more expressly instructs us in the end for which he recorded *Eve's formation from the Rib*, where he makes Adam say, or rather says himself—*Therefore shall a Man leave his Father and his Mother, and shall cleave to his Wife; and they shall be one flesh:* alluding to what they originally were, before the separation of the *Rib*.

But the allusions of *Inspired Writers* go further (of which I have given many instances) than just to ornament the discourse with the elegance of the conceit. Their chief end is to support the particular *Truth* there inculcated. Thus it is in the Text we are now considering;

it contains an instruction partly declarative, and partly perceptive.—In mere *Animals*, observant of the Command to *increase and multiply*, the Offspring, when enabled to provide for itself, is dismissed from the Parent's Wing, by an instinctive provision, which equally disposeth both to a Separation. But the REFLECTION and REASON bestowed upon *Man*, which engaged the Parent to *a longer care*, in protecting, and providing for, its Offspring, impresseth on the Offspring, in its turn, a tender sense of gratitude, and love towards the Parent, for the benefits received in that defenceless state; and naturally disposeth it to be attentive to the welfare of the Parent, when flattered by the glorious duty of returning an obligation. This might somewhat impede or run counter to the first great Command and blessing, which, in the infancy of the world, especially, required all possible encouragement: Therefore, by the most divine address it is here directed, that we should suffer this tie to give place to one more important—*Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave to his wife.*

2. With regard to the second point—Why Moses did not chuse to relate the Story of the *Rib*, where he mentions Eve's Creation, on the *sixth day*—This may be easily understood. The Story of the Woman's formation from the *Rib* is, as may be seen from the sequel of the story, of so much concern in domestic life, that we cannot conceive a fitter place for it than this, where we find it, in the Entrance upon the fatal effects of our first Parent's idle curiosity: from which Posterity might draw a Lesson of great importance, viz.—the mutual obligation incumbent on each Sex, when united, to watch over the other's conduct, equally with its own; as nothing can affect the welfare of the one, in which the other will not be equally concerned; each being destined to bear, together with his own, the other's share, whether of good or evil. The account, therefore, of *Eve's formation* was, with much art and decorum, omitted in the place where the Chronologist would expect to find it; and postponed, till it could be delivered with the advantage of being made an introduction to the history of the FALL.

The best Historians have, in the same manner, created beauties from a well-contrived neglect of the order of time.

The next thing to be considered, after the Mosaic account of the CREATION of Man, is, what we are told concerning his SPECIFIC NATURE.

That he was of a nobler Kind than any other of the Animals brought, at the same time, into *Being*, abundantly appears from the LIKENESS in which he was *made*; and from the PREEMINENCE which was given to him over the rest. "And God said, let us make *Man* IN OUR "IMAGE, after our likeness; and let him have DOMI- "NION over the fish of the Sea, and over the fowl of the "Air, and over the Cattle, and over all the Earth*."

Now, in what did this *image* or *likeness* consist? Certainly not in Man's having an IMMATERIAL PART, since he had *this*, as the best Philosophy evinceth †, in common with the whole animal Creation. And the Historian makes the *image*, or *likeness*, to consist in something peculiar to Man. Now, the only two things, peculiar to him, are his SHAPE and his REASON. None but an Anthropomorphite will say, that it was his *Shape*, which reflected this Image of his Creator. We must conclude therefore, that it was the faculty of REASON which made the resemblance.

But further, when God says, *let us make Man in our Image*, it is immediately subjoined—*and let him have dominion* over the whole brute Creation. Now, nothing but the faculty of *Reason* could invest man with this *Dominion*, DE FACTO, which was bestowed upon him, DE JURE.

Still further, we see *Dominion* was given him on account of this preeminence of being made in the image of God—*Let us make man in our Image, and let him have Dominion*—But a *preeminence*, which qualified Man for *Dominion* over other Animals, could be nothing but REASON, which he had, and which they wanted; whereas an immaterial principle, with which both were endowed, afforded no room for *preeminence*; especially such a preeminence as qualified Man for Dominion.

But now, the substance in which the faculty of *Reason* resides, could not be a *material substance*, as this best Philosophy, we say, hath shewn ‡. *Man*, therefore, must

* Gen. ii. 24. † See note [A] at the end of this Book.

‡ See Clarke and Baxter, as represented in the note [A] above referred to.

needs consist of an *immaterial* Substance, joined to a *material*; or, in other words, he must be a compound of SOUL and BODY. And this seems to be intimated, and not obscurely neither, by the Words of the Text; when it comes, in the *second Chapter*, to give a more distinct account of Man's Nature than hath been given in the preceding Chapter, where He is placed, according to the order of time, in the new framed System of Creation.—*The Lord God formed* MAN *of the* DUST OF THE GROUND, *and breathed into his nostrils* THE BREATH OF LIFE, *and Man became* A LIVING SOUL *.

By the words—*the breath of life*, and *a living Soul*—which discriminate LIFE in man from LIFE in brutes, we are not to understand *immateriality* simply; since all animals, as we say, have this in common; but the CONTINUANCE of *life* after the separation of the compound, in virtue of Man's *rationality*; which making him responsible for his Actions, may, according to the different parts in God's MORAL economy, require *that* separate existence.

But now, if it should be asked, Why this complete exposition of Man's Nature was not given before, in the *first* mention of his Creation, but reserved for the *second*, two very important reasons may be assigned.

1. Had the Historian given it in the first account of Man's Creation, it would have had the appearance of distinguishing Man, in his natural or physical capacity, from other Animals; whereas, in this capacity, there is, in truth, no difference between them. Since the very argument which evinceth the *immateriality* of the *human* soul, evinceth the immateriality of the *brutal*. Yet, to have left no mark of distinction between them when there was one, had been a very faulty omission in the History of Religion. Moses, therefore, with admirable address, hath pointed out the difference, when he tells us, that *Man was created in the image of God* †, i. e. endowed with the faculty of REASON.

2. Secondly, the place, which points out this difference, is made to serve for an introduction to the History of *the free gift of immortality*. And a better cannot be conceived than that which teacheth us, that the *Subject* on

* Gen. ii. 7. † Gen. i. 27.

whom

whom this gift was bestowed, is, by the *immateriality* of his physical Nature, capable of enjoying it; and, by the *freedom* of his reasonable Nature, accountable for the abuse of it. So much is observed in honour of that exquisite knowledge with which the sacred Writer was endowed.

Having thus explained *Man*'s PHYSICAL Nature, we come to the consideration of his MORAL; which, hitherto, we have but just hinted at, in shewing him to be responsible for his Actions. Now, as this *responsibility* is the great Principle on which all Religion, or rather the Sanction of Religion, is founded; and as it is of the utmost use in our enquiry concerning the true nature of the GOSPEL; to understand what Mode of Religion it was to which Adam became subject, when he first rose from the forming hand of his Creator, we must recollect what hath been said concerning the TIME of his Creation, which, we shall now see, will stand us in good stead to determine this important question.

1. For from thence it will appear, that the Man and Woman, the *Male and Female*, were not immediately, on their Creation, put into Paradise; but had a State and Condition upon Earth preceding that supernatural Establishment.

That this first State of Man in the world at large was not only prior to, but different from, his State in Paradise, the Sacred Writer clearly intimates: *God* (says he) on the creation of Man *(male and female) blessed them, and said unto them, Be fruitful and multiply, and* REPLENISH THE EARTH, *and subdue it* *.

But when, after they were put in possession of PARADISE, and the *gift of immortality* was there bestowed upon them, they were not (immediately at least) to *replenish the Earth* at large; but to *replenish Paradise* only: from whence, as they increased, their Colonies, perhaps, might be sent out to inhabit for a time, the other parts of the Earth (not, then, a vale of misery and *death*), before they *replenished* the Regions of the Blessed.

2. Again, at the Creation of the first Pair—*God said, Behold I have given you every herb bearing seed, which is* UPON THE FACE OF THE EARTH; *and* EVERY TREE

* Gen. i. 28.

in which is the seed of a Tree, yielding seed, TO YOU IT SHALL BE FOR MEAT *. But when God put them into *Paradise*, he said, *Of every Tree in the Garden thou mayest freely eat; but of the* TREE *of the Knowledge of good and evil,* THOU SHALT NOT EAT OF IT †.

Hence it appears that Adam and Eve had a MORAL STATE, or were engaged to some Religion, before their Paradisaical life commenced, and different from it; for in the first, there was no restraint of food; in the second, there was. Whether the *Religion*, to which they were first subject, was that we call NATURAL, as being the result and conclusion of that Reason with which, at our Creation, we were endowed; or whether it was that we call REVEALED, or supernaturally taught by God, we can only learn from Scripture. And Scripture teacheth, even by its Silence, that it was NATURAL RELIGION to which the first Pair were subject, from their Creation to their entrance into Paradise.

For Scripture hath this advantage over human compositions, that it teacheth as precisely by what it doth not say, as by what it doth. In what concerns Religion, there is nothing, either in its silence or in its enunciation, that is ambiguous.

To give an instance, for the better illustration of the matter before us. SPEECH might be acquired *naturally*, as well as RELIGION. In this they agreed: In one thing they differed—Human Reason, which was able to instruct in both, teacheth *Religion*, or our duty to our Maker, and to each other, almost instantaneously: But *Speech*, in the same School, is learnt only by slow degrees. So that *Man* must have continued long in that brutal State, to which the rest of the Animal Creation were, from their very Nature, condemned. Yet it is hard to suppose, that the all-gracious Author of our Being would leave his Favorite Creature, Man, whom he had endowed with superior gifts and prerogatives above the rest, to struggle with this mute and distressful condition, from which, unaided reason could only, by slow degrees, in a length of time, set him free. But this uncertainty holy Scripture removes; by the information it hath given us, that God himself, and not human Reason, was our first

* Gen. i. 29. † Gen. ii. 16, 17.

Schoolmaster

Schoolmaster in the rudiments of Speech. The text says, —*And out of the ground the Lord God formed every beast of the field, and every fowl of the air, and* BROUGHT THEM UNTO ADAM, TO SEE WHAT HE WOULD CALL THEM; AND WHATSOEVER ADAM CALLED EVERY LIVING CREATURE, THAT WAS THE NAME THEREOF. AND ADAM GAVE NAMES TO ALL CATTLE——*. Here we have the most natural and familiar image of a Teacher and a learner; where the abilities of the Scholar are *tried* before they are *assisted*. From this text, we likewise learn, that no more than the first rudiments of Speech were thus, in an extraordinary manner, imparted to Adam for his present and immediate use. He was assisted in affixing *names to sensible things*, with which he was to be perpetually conversant. And this was sufficient to put his *reasonable nature* in a train to advance itself above the torpid silence of the *brutal*. Thus far was man *taught of God*. But the further extent and improvement of speech, particularly in its giving *names to more abstract ideas*, was left to man alone; which *names*, as his necessities required, he would invent, and treasure up for use.

This difference, in the two acquirements of *Speech* and *Religion*, both of which natural Reason was able to teach, but not with equal facility or speed, shews why God interfered in the one case, and why he did not interfere in the other; and consequently why the Historian's *enunciation* was necessary in the first instance; and why his SILENCE, in the second, was sufficient to give equal evidence to what was the truth.

This (which indeed concerns the subject in hand) appears still clearer from the following considerations:

1. The PENTATEUCH is a professed history of God's communication with, and extraordinary dispensations to, Man, from the placing him in PARADISE to the giving of the LAW. We have seen, that Man was subject to a *Religion*, prior to that *Will of God revealed* to him when he entered Paradise. Now, were the State, under which he lived before the Paradisaical, the State of *revealed Religion*, the Nature of the Mosaic history required that some account should have been given of it.

* Gen. ii. 19, 20.

But no account is given. We conclude, therefore, that Man, on his Creation, came under the law of NATURAL RELIGION, or was, as the Apostle emphatically expresses it—*a Law unto himself* *. On this supposition, we can easily account for the *Silence* of the Historian. His Theme was REVEALED RELIGION; and to preserve the memory of such a Dispensation, it was necessary that the various modes of it should be recorded. But the memory of *Natural Religion* was preserved by an earlier Recorder, REASON: who wrote it, and continues to write it, in the minds of all Men. Of this original Record, Moses hath given sufficient intimation, where, speaking of Man's nature, he tells, that it was created in the LIKENESS OF GOD: meaning (as hath been shewn) that Man was endowed with REASON. Now such a LIKENESS implies his knowledge of, and confessed subjection to, NATURAL LAW OR RELIGION.

2. But it is not only from the *Silence* of the Historian, as to what preceded Man's migration into Paradise, but likewise from what he expressly *tells us* followed on Man's situation there, that we conclude, he was from his creation to this time, under the guidance of the LAW OF NATURE only: For the REVEALED LAW of God to Man in Paradise, after bestowing upon him the *free gift* of immortality, consists but of one *positive Command*, as the condition of this accumulated blessing; a condition very different from any of those which *Natural Religion* requires to entitle Man to God's *favour*: This plainly implies, that Adam, by the Light of Reason, knew already the rest of God's Will, with which, as Moral Governor of the World, he had irradiated the breasts of all Men. Otherwise, had this light been so dim as to give no clear direction for his duty, we must conclude, that the all-gracious Creator would have expressly delivered to him a complete Code or Digest of *Natural Law*, at the time when he enounced this *revealed Command* in Paradise. And that he did not give any such, the *Silence* of the Historian, in a work whose Nature would not dispense with such an omission, is a certain proof.

To sum up all in a word—Man's moral State, under

* Rom. ii. 14.

the

the *revealed Will* of God, began on his admission into Paradise. From which truth it follows, that, from his Creation to that time, he was under the guidance of NATURAL RELIGION.

And here let me just make an observation (which it would be a fault to neglect, though it be but one of the numerous instances of divine art in this inspired Writer) concerning the different terms employed by him in defining *Man* as the subject of *Natural Religion*, from those he uses in defining him as the subject of the *Revealed*. In the first case, Man is characterised by that distinctive quality of his being made in the *likeness of God**, or being endowed with REASON; the faculty which denotes him the subject of *Natural Religion*; that Religion which teacheth the rewards and punishments of Heaven INDEFINITELY. In the second case, he is distinguished as a compound Being, made of *the dust of the earth and the breath of life*†, which marks him out for the adequate subject of that other Religion, denouncing *death* and *immortality* DEFINITELY.

To proceed.—This *natural* State of Man, antecedent to the *Paradisaical*, can never be too carefully kept in mind, nor too precisely explained; since it is the very KEY, or CLEW (as we shall find in the progress of this work) which is to open to us, and to lead us through, all the recesses and intimacies of the *last*, and *completed*, *Dispensation* of God to Man; a Dispensation long become intricate and perplexed, by men's neglecting to distinguish these two States or Conditions; which, as we say, if not constantly kept in mind, the GOSPEL can neither be well understood nor reasonably supported.

So terribly mistaken have those good Men been, who imagined, that the best way of serving the cause of *Revelation* was to deny the very being and existence of *Natural Religion*.

But if some have allowed too little to *this Religion*, there are others, and those no declared enemies of *Revelation*, who have ascribed a great deal too much to it. Systems which, however different, are yet alike injurious to the great Truth they profess to defend.

The one, by annihilating *Natural Religion*, cuts away

* Gen. i. 26. † Gen. ii. 7.

the *ground and foundation* of CHRISTIANITY; the other, by giving to *Natural Religion* certain Doctrines of Perfection, to which it doth not pretend, overturns the *Superstructure*.

Having thus shewn that Man lived, at first, under the guidance of *Natural Religion*; let us now consider more precisely, but with all possible brevity, What this Religion is, and what it teacheth.

If my ideas, whether innate or acquired, do not mislead me, the whole of it may be comprised in this—"That Man, endowed with REASON and FREEDOM OF WILL, is a Moral Agent, and accountable for his conduct to his Maker; who hath given him, for his rule of Life, a LAW, discoverable by the one Faculty, and rendered practicable by the other.—That the faithful Observers of this LAW God will reward, and the wilful Transgressors of it he will punish; but that, on repentance and amendment, he will pardon, and be reconciled to, Offenders."

This SANCTION of *Natural Religion*, evident as it is, hath been brought into question, and disputed, not only by those who reject our idea of such a moral System, but by those who contend for it.

The *first* have said, that we know so little of God's government of the universe, that it is hazardous to affirm, that Man hath any claim at all to Reward. The *other*, that it is still more hazardous to affirm, that REPENTANCE will certainly restore bad Men to the benefit of this Claim, if, before their transgression, they had any such.

Yet the Truths (thus boldly brought in question) are founded on this clear Principle, "That, taking in the whole of a good Man's existence, God will bestow upon him more of happiness than of misery." To deny this, will tend to confound our distinct ideas of a good and of an evil Governor of the World. Nor are these truths, thus founded, at all shaken by *our ignorance* of God's government of the universe. I apprehend, that the supposed force of the objection ariseth from Men's not rightly distinguishing between God's PHYSICAL and MORAL Government; nor seeing how the consequences of that distinction directs our judgment to decide of the evidence in religious matters, and particularly of the force

force of this objection. I will not here repeat my reasoning on this subject, which the reader may find already delivered in pages 221, 222, and 223 of the *Introduction*, and will see repeated, occasionally, hereafter. In behalf of these repetitions, had I added one more, on the present occasion, I should have no need to apologize: for as often as an old argument supports a Truth, newly attacked, the use of that argument, on such an occasion, cannot be called a repetition of it, but a different application of it to a new question. And every different application will give additional credit to the solidity of the argument, when it is seen how many various purposes it may be made to serve, and how many various Truths it is fitted to illustrate. This is one of those FRUITFUL ARGUMENTS, frequently to be met with in this Work, which I have enforced again and again, in the support of *some new Truth*; and which, I make no doubt, a less attentive Reader has as often condemned for *a repetition of the same thing*.

From this Argument, so referred to, as it lies in the *Introduction*, we may safely conclude, that *a good man hath a claim to reward:* And this, I think, Religionists, consulting no more than their natural ideas, have generally agreed in; and yet have generally concurred to deny that other part of the proposition (though it stand upon the same Principle) which teacheth, that God will re-establish the repentant Sinner in his original claim to divine favour.

This may seem unaccountable; but there is a secret in it, which will deserve to be explained, for more reasons than one; but at present, principally for the sake of removing this difficulty.

The truth is, those Divines, who doubted of this *re-establishment*, laboured under a groundless apprehension, that to allow the Doctrine of *reconciliation, on sincere repentance alone*, might tend to supersede the necessity of the *Christian Revelation*; which they erroneously supposed taught nothing concerning a future state but what was discoverable, and had been actually discovered, by the *light of Nature:* So that if natural Religion taught ONE means of *Reconciliation*, and *Revelation* taught ANOTHER, both could not be true. They, therefore, rejected that, as false, which *natural Religion* was said to teach.

teach. And modern Unbelievers being under the like delusion, viz. that *natural Religion and revealed* taught the same doctrine concerning a future state, reject, as false, that *means of reconciliation* which *Revelation* pretends to have discovered.

But we have bestowed our pains to little purpose, if, by this time, the attentive Reader doth not perceive, that the *Rewards*, taught by *natural Religion*, are very different in *kind*, as well as in *degree*, from those taught by the *Revealed:* However, if he hath not yet been sufficiently instructed in this important truth, the sequel of our Discourse, to which we are now hastening, will, we hope, give him entire satisfaction.

I had said, and on the Authority of St. Paul himself, that *natural Religion* taught, that *God is a Rewarder of them that diligently seek him**. Now, from his being a *Rewarder*, which springs from his nature and attributes, I have ventured to found Man's *claim to reward.*"

But it may be asked, WHERE are those rewards to be expected, and of WHAT quality do they consist?

To the first part of the question, I reply—That, at what time soever God's Providence hath been dispensed EQUALLY to the Sons of Adam, living under the direction of *natural Law*, they could expect their reward only HERE. But, whenever they began to observe, that God's Providence was grown UNEQUAL, and that rewards and punishments were not regularly dispended *here*, they would look to have the disorder rectified HEREAFTER. But of this, more as we proceed.

To the second part of the question, Of WHAT quality these rewards consist? I reply, We are taught to believe, they shall be abundant, as suited to that better state of existence to which they are reserved; and as bestowed by an all-bountiful Master, to whose more intimate presence they shall be admitted: yet still bearing some adequate proportion to Man's merit and desert.

If REASON, on the one hand, seems to revolt at the thoughts of *everlasting Punishment*; (for, as God is a Rewarder of the Good, we must conclude, the Apostle would have us infer, that he is a *Punisher* of the Bad; since this exercise of his power over both Good and Bad,

* Heb. xi. 6.

stands

stands on the same attributes of *Goodness* and *Justice*;) If REASON, I say, doth, on the one hand, seem to revolt at *everlasting Punishment*, we must confess, that FANCY, on the other (even when full plumed by *Vanity*), hath scarce force enough to rise to the idea of *infinite rewards*. How the heart of Man came to conceive this to be an adequate retribution for his right conduct, during the short trial of his Virtue here, would be hard to tell, did we not know what Monsters PRIDE begot of old upon *Pagan Philosophy*; and how much greater still these latter ages have disclosed, by the long incubation of *School-divinity* upon *Folly*.

What hath been urged from natural reason, in support of this extravagant presumption, is so very slender, that it recoils as you inforce it. 1. First, you say, "that the SOUL, the subject of these eternal rewards, being *immaterial*, and so therefore unaffected by the causes which bring material things to an end, is, by its nature, fitted for eternal rewards." This is an argument *ad ignorantiam*, and holds no farther—Because an *immaterial* Being is not subject to that mode of dissolution which affects *material* substances, you conclude it to be eternal. This is going too fast. There may be, and probably are, many natural causes, (unknown, indeed, to us,) whereby immaterial Beings come to an end. But if the nature of things cannot, yet certainly God can, put a period to such a Being, when it hath served the purpose of its Creation. Doth ANNIHILATION impeach that Wisdom and Goodness which was displayed when God brought it OUT OF NOTHING?

Other *immaterial* Beings there are (as hath been observed) who have the same natural security with man for their existence, of whose *eternity* we never dream; I mean the Souls of Brutes. But PRIDE, as the Poet observes, *calls God unjust*:

"If MAN alone ingross not Heaven's high care;
"Alone made *perfect* here, IMMORTAL there."

Fanatics, indeed, both New and Old, have well provided for the proper eternity of the human Soul, by making it a part or portion of the substance of God himself*. But so blasphemous a fancy, all sober Christians, from the

* See note [B] at the end of this Book.

most

most early times to the present, have looked upon with horror.

However, let us (for argument's sake) allow the human Soul to be unperishable by nature, and secured in its existence by the unchangeable will of God: and see what will follow from thence.—An *infinite* Reward for Virtue, during one moment of its existence, because Reason discovers that, by the Law of Nature, some Reward is due? By no means—When God hath amply repaid us for the performance of our duty, will he be at a loss how to dispose of us for the long remainder of ETERNITY? May he not find new and endless employment for reasonable Creatures, to which, when properly discharged, new rewards, and in endless succession, will be assigned? Modest Reason seems to dictate this to the Followers of the *Law of Nature*. The flattering expedient of ETERNAL REWARDS, for Virtue here, was invented in the simplicity of early speculation, after it had fairly brought men to conclude that the soul was *immaterial*.

2. A second Argument, from the conviction it carries with it, I would recommend to the care and protection of its Discoverers, the *Platonists* and *Poets*; namely, Men's LONGINGS AFTER IMMORTALITY, even in the *state of Nature*. These, say our Poetical Metaphysicians, and Metaphysical Poets, are a proof that we shall obtain what we long for; since natural appetites were not given in vain. The *foundation*, on which this argument stands, is not, it must be confessed, quite void of all plausibility. The general appetite for GOOD was indeed given by Nature, to aid us in the easier and speedier attainment of it. But in this consists the sophistry of the reasoning—Because the appetite for *Good* is essential in the constitution of every sensitive Being, it is concluded, that we shall obtain the GREATEST GOOD which the *Imagination* can form, for the object of its wishes. And, to call this visionary Operator, *Nature*, and not *Fancy*, will scarce mend the matter, if the noble Philosopher* did not vilify his species, when he said, that *She did not know how to keep a mean or measure* †. The Phenomenon is easily explained. The PASSIONS were given to excite our Activity in the pursuit of *Good*: and

* Bacon. † Modum tenere nescia est.

the

the violence of such of them, as drive most impetuously to their end, will be apt to transgress the *mean*. But there is another part as essential to our frame, which is REASON; and her office it is to keep the Passions within due bounds; then most apt to fly out, when pursued by that frightful Phantom, ANNIHILATION. And as the best security against this terror is the *pledge of immortality*, we are too much in haste to inquire of *Reason*, Whether, indeed, NATURAL RELIGION hath given us this security.

From all that hath been said, I would infer, that our appetites, or LONGINGS after good, were given us, not to lead the conclusions of *Reason*, but to be led by them, lest these LONGINGS should become extravagant.

3. But the palmary argument is still behind. It is partly Physical, and partly Moral. "The merit of service (say these Men) increases in proportion to the excellence of that Being to whom our service is directed and becomes acceptable. An infinite Being, therefore, can dispense no rewards but what are infinite. And thus the Virtuous Man becomes intitled to immortality.

The misfortune is, that this reasoning holds equally on the side of the UNMERCIFUL DOCTORS, as they are called, who doom the Wicked to EVERLASTING PUNISHMENT. Indeed, were this the only discredit under which it labours, the *merciless Doctors* would hold themselves little concerned. But the truth is, the Argument from *infinity* proves just nothing. To make it of any force, both the Parties should be *infinite*. This inferior emanation of God's *Image*, MAN, should either be supremely good or supremely bad, a kind of Deity or Devil. But these Reasoners, in their attention to the *Divinity*, overlook the *Humanity*, which makes the decrease keep pace with the accumulation, till the rule of Logic, that *the conclusion follows the weaker part*, comes in, to end the dispute.

This view of things, which presents to us the reward, held out by the *Law of Nature*, clears up, at the same time, the more disputed question, concerning *the efficacy of repentance alone*, to reinstate us in God's FAVOUR; and shews, that this doctrine of *Natural Religion* is very consistent with what *Revealed* Religion teacheth, concerning RECONCILIATION, on repentance: since the rewards,

rewards, promised by each Religion, being totally different, they may reasonably, when forfeited, have different means appointed for their recovery. Hence it is, that, by the *first*, simple repentance, we say, is deemed sufficient; and by the latter, some ATONEMENT may be reasonably required, together with repentance.

On the whole of what has been said concerning *Natural Religion*, we see, That REASON reclaims against the pride of such of its votaries, who expect *eternal rewards*, when that Religion only promiseth very ample ones.

Come we now to the Condition of Man under REVEALED RELIGION. For God (as we must needs conclude) having tried Adam in the STATE OF NATURE, and approved of the good use he had made of his free-will under the direction of that light, advanced him to a superior station in *Paradise*. How LONG, before this remove, Man had continued subject to *Natural Religion* alone, we can only guess. But of this we may be assured, that it was some considerable time before the Garden of Eden could naturally be made fit for his reception. Since Moses, when he had concluded his History of the Creation, and of God's *rest* on, and *sanctification* of, the *seventh day**, proceeds to speak of the condition of this new world, in the following terms:—*And God created every living plant of the field, before it was in the earth, and every herb of the field before it grew; for the Lord God had not caused it to rain upon the Earth* †. Which seem plainly to intimate, that when the seeds of vegetables had been created on the *third day*, they were left to Nature, in its ordinary operations, to mature by Sun and showers. So that when, in course of time, Paradise was become capable of accommodating its inhabitants, they were transplanted thither.—"And the Lord "took the Man, and put him into the Garden of Eden "—And the Lord God commanded the Man, saying, "Of every Tree of the Garden thou mayest freely eat; "but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil thou "shalt not eat: for in the day that thou eatest thereof "thou shalt surely die ‡." In this manner, was the first extraordinary revelation of God's Will, or what we call

* Gen. ii. 2, 3. † Gen. ii. 4, 5. ‡ Gen. ii. 15.

REVEALED

REVEALED RELIGION, added to, or more properly built upon, the *Religion of Nature*; which continued to be the foundation of all God's extraordinary Dispensations throughout the whole course of his moral Government of Man.

Well! Adam disobeyed the Command. He ate, and became (as he was first created) MORTAL.—*And lest* (as the Historian says) *he should put forth his hand, and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live for ever**, he is driven out of Paradise, and sent back again to his former State; the subject of *natural Religion*. And in this subjection he continued till the giving of the LAW.

From this account we learn, that, had Adam not disobeyed the Command, he would have lived for ever, exempt from the present condition of *mortality*; since this return to it was the penalty of his transgression.

And lest we should make a wrong inference from what we read, that *immortal life* was Man's *natural claim* from the time of his creation; and not a *free gift* bestowed upon him on his entrance into Paradise; the Historian tells us of the means employed to exclude him from the TREE OF LIFE, which conferred *immortality* on the Eater. The ideas which this language conveys are, indeed, *allegorical*; but they inform us of this, and of nothing but this, that *immortal life was a thing extraneous to our Nature*; and not put into our paste or composition, when first fashioned by the forming hand of the Creator†.

If it be asked, why Moses did not record this free gift of immortality, lost by the first Adam, in as open and clear terms as the second Adam proclaimed the *recovery* of it? the reason will be given, more at large, hereafter. At present, I shall just observe, (though, perhaps, a little prematurely) that the several MESSENGERS of God's several *Revelations* had each his proper office to discharge. It was the office of JESUS to *bring life and immortality to light*, or to promulge the Doctrine of it in open day. It was MOSES's office to record the *loss*, and TO SUPPLY THE WANT OF IT‡, in that Dispensation

* Gen. iii. 22.

† Gen. ii. 7. And the Lord formed man of the dust of the ground, &c. compared with Gen. iii. 19.

‡ See the Subject of the DIVINE LEGATION.

which

which was committed to his Charge. He could go no further than just to hint at a *recovery*, in covert and obscure expressions.

On these different and respective grounds then stood, and must for ever stand, NATURAL and REVEALED Religion.

The first teacheth an abundant *reward* for *virtue*; the other promised a *blessed immortality* on the observance of a *positive command.*

This distinction, carefully kept in mind, will reflect great lights upon both Religions. As, by the neglect of it the *Mosaic* Dispensation hath lain, for many ages, involved in obscurities; and the *Christian* is become subject to inexplicable difficulties. This will be seen as we proceed.

At present let it suffice to observe,—1. That this account of the Paradisaical State supports our Capital Assertion, that *Natural* Religion neither teacheth nor promiseth *eternal Rewards.* While it is supposed to do so, nothing can be conceived more discrediting of REVELATION; for it will force us to conclude, that God arbitrarily annexed *Salvation*, or eternal life, to one condition by the *Law of Grace*, and to another condition by the *Law of Nature.* This observation will have its weight with those plain men, who allow, to the two connected Laws, the common privilege of explaining one another.

2. It enables us to see clearly into another reason, why the *condition of immortality* was the observance of a *positive command*; and not the performance of moral duty at large. For *immortal life* being a *free-gift* to which no man had a claim by nature, it might be given on whatever *condition* best pleased the Benefactor. And the observance of a *positive duty* was very fitly preferred to a *moral*; as it best marked out the nature of the benefit, which was of *grace* and not of *debt.*

3. But there is still another reason, (arising from the moral order of things,) why this *free-gift*, if it were fit or necessary to be bestowed on *condition*, should rather be annexed to a *positive* than a *moral* duty. No one, I suppose, was ever so wild as to imagine, that had Adam not eaten of the FORBIDDEN FRUIT, he would have been intitled to *immortality*, unless he had likewise observed

observed the dictates of the MORAL LAW, which *natural Religion* enjoins; the habitual violation of which, unrepented of, every reflecting man sees, must have deprived him of *immortality*, as inevitably as the transgression of the *positive Command*. The reason is evident. Man living under the *Law of Nature*, when the *free gift of immortality* was bestowed on him, his previous qualification to fit him for the acceptance of the free gift, must needs be *some reward*; or, in other words, his having a claim to *that* REWARD which *natural Religion* bestows. Now nothing but the observance of *moral duties* could intitle him to *some reward*. The consequence is, that the observance of moral duties was a condition *annexed by nature*, and appropriated to that *reward* which follows the favour of God in general; and so could not be made the condition of a *different* thing; viz. *the free gift of immortality*, which was founded in a prior capacity of *reward*; and this capacity acquired by the performance of moral duties.

These things give the curious observer such exalted ideas of divine Wisdom, in the order and course of God's Dispensations to Man, that (transported with the idea) I have anticipated a *Truth*, which, though it be of present use to confirm what hath been already said concerning the separate states, and different genius of *Natural* and *Revealed* Religion, yet belongs more properly to another place; where I shall employ it to remove a difficulty which hath so long *entangled*, that it hath at length *discredited* the most rational as well as essential Principle of Christianity.

In the mean time, we see, to how little purpose Divines have fatigued themselves, and others, to give a reason, Why a *positive* and not a *moral* duty was made the condition of *immortal life*. In the course of which enquiry, some have been so extravagant as to assert, that the sequestered state of the first Pair made the observance of a *moral duty* an improper condition to be annexed to this *free gift*; seeing, in that state, opportunities were wanting to exercise them. But, if we divide moral duty, as is commonly done, into the three separate Branches, of *Divine*, *Personal*, and *Social*, we shall find that Adam had an equal occasion to practise the two first, as if sent

into a world filled with Inhabitants; and the most meritorious part of the third, as soon as ever he was blessed with *a Help meet for him* *.

The truth is, the State of *Natural Religion*, under which Adam lived till he was put into *Paradise*, unobserved by Divines; and the mistaken ideas entertained of it, by them, when they had observed it, and distinguished it from the *Revealed*, betrayed them into these absurdities, and gave birth (as we shall see hereafter) to a thousand errors, which have obscured and deformed the glories of that last great and best Work in God's moral government, THE REDEMPTION OF MANKIND BY THE SACRIFICE OF HIS SON.

From the account here given, God's JUSTICE, with regard to the effects of Adam's transgression upon his Posterity, is fully declared. Adam fell, and forfeited the *free gift* of immortality—*in the day that thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die* †. He returned to his former state in which he was created, subject to mortality; *that death* which follows the separation of soul and body. It is astonishing that any *other death* should have been understood by those words ‡, when the very *sentence of condemnation* itself confines us to the sense here given —*In the sweat of thy face* (says God) *shalt thou eat bread, till* THOU RETURN UNTO THE GROUND: *for out of it wast thou taken: for dust thou art, and* UNTO DUST SHALT THOU RETURN §.

In this State, Adam begot a *Posterity*, which naturally became sharers in his original condition of *Mortality* ‖. And, Were they injured in not being made partakers of a gift never bestowed upon them? Absurd! They were left and continued in possession of all the Rights inherent in their original nature; and would have

* Gen. ii. 18. † Gen. ii. 17.

‡ See note [C] at the end of this Book. § Gen. iii. 19.

‖ "By *death* (says Mr. Locke) some men understand *endless torments in Hell fire*.—But it seems a strange way of understanding a Law, (which requires the plainest and directest words), that by *death* should be meant, *eternal life in misery*. Can any one be supposed, by a Law, which says, *for felony thou shalt surely die*—not that he should lose his life, but be kept alive in perpetual and exquisite torments? And would any one think himself fairly dealt with that was so used?" Reasonableness of Christianity, vol. ii. p. 508.

had

had the benefit of the FREE GIFT, had not he, to whom it was given, and from whom they were descended, forfeited it before they came into Being *. What *Physical* contagion they contracted at their birth, either of body or of mind, is of little use to enquire; since, however Man came by his Malady, his cure is one and the same.

So good reason had St. Paul not to think he impeached the *Justice* of God, when he said, that DEATH *reigned from Adam to Moses, even over those who had* NOT SINNED AFTER THE SIMILITUDE *of Adam's transgression* †, i. e. over those who died before they came to the knowledge of good and evil. Now, as the *death*, here mentioned, could be only Physical, though total; the *death* spoken of, in the same sentence, as denounced on the rest of mankind, who had *sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression*, must, consequently, be Physical likewise.

Thus both infants and adults falling under the very letter of the sentence denounced on Adam, we see how God's justice is made apparent.

Another important truth emerges from this account of the FALL, viz. that this part of the Mosaic History is NO ALLEGORY, as hath been commonly imagined. The root of which conceit, as indeed of many other extravagancies that have deformed the rational simplicity of the Christian Faith, hath been the confounding the distinct and different sanctions of *natural* and *revealed* Religion with one another. For Divines, as we said, having mistaken these sanctions to be the same, namely IMMORTALITY, they were led to conclude, though against the express words of the text, that Adam's transgression was a breach of some precept of the MORAL LAW, and, consequently, that the account which represented it as the violation of a *positive Command*, was an ALLEGORY: and being once got upon this fairy-ground, every man had it in his power to pursue, as he liked, the favourite Vision, which he himself had raised from an *Allegory* left unexplained by the sacred Writer. Numberless have been these monsters of the Imagina-

* See what is said concerning the difference between the forfeiture of natural and adventitious Rights. Div. Leg. B. v. § 5.

† Rom. v. 14. See also note [D] at the end of this Book.

tion. But a late Allegorist of the history of the *Fall* hath so discredited the trade, by his absurd and abominable fancies, fit only to be told by himself *, that were it not for the account which both believers and unbelievers find in this commodious method of evading difficulties, we might hope at length to get free of the dishonour of having so long abused a rational mode of information.

We have shewn what the last *believing* Writer hath invented, to render the abuse *odious*; let us now see what the last *unbelieving* Writer hath offered to render the abuse *ridiculous*. He assures us, that the Scripture account of the FALL *is a* MERE ALLEGORY, *in the manner of the Eastern Fables, signifying that man was formed to a state of happiness and perfection, which he enjoyed as long as he continued innocent, but lost and forfeited it by following his lusts and passions, in opposition to the will of his Creator; and became miserable as soon as he became a wilful and habitual sinner* †.

Here we see the learned Doctor throws aside his usual reserve, and preaches up rank DEISM without disguise; while he makes the FALL from, and RESTORATION to, life, as taught in the *Old* and *New Testament*, to be nothing more than an *Emblem* of the frail Condition of Man, to whom God had given the LAW OF NATURE for his only guide. On this principle he attacks Dr. Waterland's and Bishop Sherlock's explanations of the story of the FALL. But the force of his reasoning (as hath been the good fortune of most deistical Writers) springs not from the truth of his own notions, but from the futility of his Adversary's.—"Pray tell us," (says the learned Doctor, with that vivacity which he never restrained, when he had his Adversary at advantage,) "What is it "we Christians are obliged to believe of it?. [the story "of the *Fall.*] Must we believe it to be all an *Allegory?* "No. It is the allegorical interpretation that has drawn "all this clamour from me, of weakening the authority "of Moses and favouring infidelity. Must we believe "it to be all *literal?* No. We are not allowed to do "that, since there is certainly much *mystery* in it. What "then are we to do? Why we are to consider it as

* See the Memoirs of the Life of Mr. W. Whiston, vol. i. p. 339.

† Dr. Middleton's Works, 4to. vol. ii. p. 131. and vol. iii. p. 199.

"neither

" neither fact nor fable; neither literal nor allegorical;
" to interpret one sentence *literally*, the next *allegori-*
" *cally*; the third again *literally*; and so on to the
" end of the chapter; which, like the very Serpent
" it treats of, is all over spotted and speckled; here with
" *letter*, there with *mystery*; and sometimes, with a dash
" of both *."

This, on a supposition (the truth of which, both the Deist and the Believer took for granted) that the Mosaic account of the FALL was an ALLEGORY, hath its weight. But none at all, on the supposition, whose truth I have endeavoured to evince, that the Mosaic account is a HISTORY OF FACT, and not, as the learned Doctor pretends, A MERE ALLEGORY; interlarded, indeed, as the ancient Histories of greatest weight have always been, with strong figurative expressions, as well *allegorical* as *metaphorical*. In such a kind of composition, the best rules of interpretation not only justify the rational Critic in understanding some expressions *literally*, and others *allegorically*, but necessarily require his observance of this rule. To do what the learned Doctor requires of him—To stick throughout, either to the *letter* or the *figure*, would betray much ignorance of the genius of ancient literature. When Adam is said to have *eaten of forbidden fruit*, and *Israel to have committed whoredom*, Do these phrases (used by the same Historian in his History of the *Fall*, and afterwards in the History of the Jewish *Defection*) make one more an ALLEGORY than the other? Are not both narratives of facts *figuratively* adorned? the first, to denote *Adam's transgression of a positive Command*; and the other, to signify *the defection of the Israelites into Idolatry*.

The cold raillery, therefore, of our learned Doctor, while he considers the Mosaic Account of the FALL, *as neither fact nor fable, neither literal nor allegorical, but to be sometimes interpreted one way, sometimes another*—might, for his credit, have been spared; as informing us of nothing but his inattention to, or ignorance of, literary composition, as it was in its primeval state; early formed, and still continuing to exist, amongst People undisciplined by arts and polished manners.

* See the Doctor's Defence of his Letter to Waterland.

The truth is, our Critic in his censure, and those learned Divines, in their defence, have equally confounded two distinct Species of Writing with one another; that is to say, an ALLEGORY with a real HISTORY ornamented with metaphorical and allegoric colouring. The Divines, to serve their occasions, did it, either wittingly or inadvertently; and the learned Doctor, to serve his, either followed their example or imitated their practice. These Divines had observed, that preceding Commentators on the Bible had, occasionally, in the narrative parts, *jumped from the literal to the allegoric sense, and so backward and forward to the end of the Chapter*, because they found, that where the language was full of *figurative* terms, it was reasonable and necessary so to do. Their error was, in supposing they might do the same, in what they believed to be an ALLEGORY. On the other hand, our Doctor saw the absurdity of this practice in an *Allegory*; but his error was, in supposing it to be equally absurd to do the same in a *figurative* narration of fact.

And what occasioned the common mistake of both parties was, their having (as we say) confounded these two species of Composition with one another; which they would never have done, had they but considered, that the end of an ALLEGORY is to *hide*, and the purpose of allegorical, that is figurative expressions, only to *ornament*.

But, as the History of the *Fall* is, in Dr. Middleton's sense, a MERE ALLEGORY, and as his MORAL of the *Fable* tends to reduce the whole Doctrine of the Gospel to MERE DEISM; I shall now endeavour to shew, from the *very genius of Antiquity*, that *his Moral* is not of the nature of those which the most early times loved to disguise under that cover.

It is, in the learned Doctor's opinion, A MERE ALLEGORY, *in the manner of the Eastern Fables, signifying; that Man was formed to a state of happiness and perfection; which he enjoyed as long as he continued innocent, but lost and forfeited it by following his lusts and passions, and so became miserable.*

The truth of his idea, of its being A MERE ALLEGORY, hath been examined already. But this is not the whole

of his idea: It is, if you will believe him, *in the* MANNER OF THE EASTERN FABLES.

An observation, that betrays his ignorance both of *Eastern Fables* and *Eastern Truths*. The *Fables* of the Ancients, whether of the East or West, were invented, as I have shewn elsewhere, for this end, and for no other, namely, to hide from the People, under that cover, such *Truths* as were above the People's capacity to comprehend; or were judged inexpedient, for the sake of public utility, that they should know. This Veil, however, their Wise Men were able to penetrate; and so could benefit themselves of all the Truth conveyed under it; and the Public, of just so much as was judged expedient for them to be made acquainted with.

But what pretence is there to say, that either of these causes of concealment had any place in the MORAL, which the Doctor is pleased to tell us is conveyed under the *fable of the Fall*. The *Moral* contains a Truth of the utmost clearness, and most general use; whose publication could be of no possible disservice to Society, or be abused by one single individual in it.

On the other hand, if, instead of this MORAL, of *a simple lapse from innocence to guilt*, we believe that Jesus and his Apostles have rightly interpreted the Mosaic account of the FALL, where they inform us of the specific nature of the loss which Adam sustained thereby; and if, from the nature and course of God's Dispensations, we see the fitness of its remaining a *Mystery* for many ages, that *Mystery* which (the Apostle tells us) *was hid from ages and generations, but was at length made manifest to the Saints* *; if this, I say, were the case, then, indeed, though the Doctor's *Moral* required none of this Cover to his MERE ALLEGORY: yet such a Cover very well suited the History of Moses; and justified the interpretation of the Apostles.

Thus the POSITIVE COMMAND, whatever it specifically was, is contained in the words of *not eating of the Fruit of the tree of good and evil*—the TEMPTER, THE EVIL BEING, is shadowed under the *Serpent*—and the CONDEMNATION TO DEATH, by Adam's return to his first state of MORTALITY.

* Col. i. 26.

Having thus cleared the revealed Doctrine of the FALL from the absurdity of this deistical interpretation, I now go on with my Subject.

Man, having forfeited the *free gift of Immortality*, is driven out of *Paradise*, and returned back to the state and condition in which he was created, a Subject only of NATURAL RELIGION. With this difference, that, before his entrance into Paradise, he was altogether ignorant of the extent of his finite duration: on his expulsion from thence, he might learn, from the terms of his *Sentence*, that the execution of it, by DEATH, was at no great distance.—*In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken: for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return**.

But when we speak of the two Religions, *natural* and *revealed*, we must distinguish (in our use of the term, REVELATION) between a *System* of revealed Religion, and an occasional Communication of the divine Will to Man, for his conduct on particular points, or for his comfort in general, when the course of God's moral government required that he should, from time to time, have intimations given to him, more or less obscurely, of the hidden purpose of Providence in his favour; and this, through various Dispensations, till, at the final completion of them, *life and immortality* should be again *brought to light* and restored. These occasional Communications began with that contained in the Sentence denounced on the *Serpent*, or the EVIL ONE, that *the seed of the Woman should bruise his head; and that he should bruise its heel*†: And ended with that given by the mouth of Jacob, *that the sceptre should not depart from Judah, nor a Lawgiver from between his feet, until* SHILOH *should come, to whom the gathering of the People should be*‡.

What followed these occasional Communications was that SECOND SYSTEM of *Revealed Religion*, delivered to the Posterity of *Abraham*, by Moses, preparatory to the THIRD and last, under the Reign or rule of *Shiloh*, or JESUS CHRIST, which took in and embraced the whole Posterity of *Adam*.

* Gen. iii. 19. † Gen. iii. 15. ‡ Gen. xlix. 10.

So

So that, of *Revelations*, in the sense of REVEALED SYSTEMS of RELIGION, there were but THREE: the *first*, given to *Adam* when placed in Paradise; the *second*, to the Posterity of Abraham, when going (under the ministry of *Moses*) to possess the *promised Land*; and the *third*, promulged to all Mankind, by *Jesus the Messiah*.

Ignorance, of this matter, made the Rabbins invent a fanciful *System of Revealed Religion*, as given to the *Sons of Noah*, under the name of the SEVEN PRECEPTS.—So that it seemed proper just to hint at this *distinction*; which, for want of attending to, hath been the occasion of much error and mistake.

We have now seen MAN under the two first States of God's Moral Government, the *natural* and the *revealed*; and how, by his misconduct in the *second*, he was returned back again to the *first*; in which he remained throughout the long interval from Adam to Moses; when, by this time, the NATURAL LAW was become so vitiated, and obscured, that all memory of the LAWGIVER was lost and forgotten. So that the knowledge of the one true God, on which all *natural* as well as *revealed* Religion is founded, was, of necessity, to be REPUBLISHED to the world, by MOSES, when he entered on his Mission; who not only rekindled its extinguished flame, but, by the *Dispensation* committed to his care, in which the *first Cause* constantly and immediately directs all things, obviated the like misfortune for the future.

And as this Dispensation, called the LAW, being the prelude and preparation to the GOSPEL, whose Author was the promised MESSIAH, the Restorer of what was lost in Adam, could be only made intelligible by the previous knowledge of the *cause* and *nature* of that loss, therefore hath Moses studiously recorded that previous Knowledge.

And here it will be proper to observe, that had Jesus been only a MESSENGER sent from heaven, with no other purpose than to propagate a System of revealed Morals, or to *republish* the Law of Nature, we can see no reason why LIFE AND IMMORTALITY might not have been promulged by MOSES for the Sanction of the *Law*, as well as by JESUS CHRIST, who hath made it the peculiar Sanction of the *Gospel*: and so both Doctrines, that of the *true God*,

God, and of *eternal life*, have come from Heaven together. The SOCINIANS, and they who deny a REDEMPTION by the *Atonement* of a REAL SACRIFICE *on the Cross*, would do well to reconsider this matter. But more of it in a fitter place.

To proceed. By the Penalty inflicted on Adam, he (with all his Posterity) was again made *mortal*; that is, became EXTINCT, at the natural dissolution of the union between Soul and Body.

But that *distribution* of reward and punishment, which God, under every mode of his Moral Government, makes, with supreme justice, either here in this world, or hereafter in another, was (when the sentence of DEATH was denounced on Man's transgression) at first made here in this world, so long as he continued to be favoured with the administration of an equal or extraordinary Providence. Which, as we learn from the Mosaic History, continued from the FALL down to the time when Polytheism universally prevailed. For, when the World, by reason of the Vices and Corruptions of its Inhabitants, *did not like to retain God in their knowledge, but changed the glory of the incorruptible God, into an Image made like to corruptible Man**; that first dispensation of Providence was withdrawn.

Yet, as soon as God had selected a *chosen Race*, and had separated it from the rest of Mankind, *to place his name there*, we see with astonishment, this *equal Providence* revive in Judea; for Man was still under the *Curse* or *doom of death*. And this existed, till repeated Idolatries, the crime which first caused the *equal Providence* to be withdrawn from the Nations at large, did at length deprive the *chosen People*, likewise, of their share of this blessing.

And, by such time as they had invariably returned from their Apostasy to the pure worship of the *God of their Fathers*, the Course of God's moral government required, that the nature and genius of the GOSPEL (the Religion which completed all the foregoing, and which, by the recovery of what was lost in Adam, made an *equal Providence* no longer necessary) was gradually revealed unto them. This, as we say, superseded the use, and

* Rom. i. 23—28.

prevented

prevented the return, of that *equal Providence*; which, otherwise, on their adherence to the God of Israel, and perseverance in his worship, they might naturally have expected. Nay, the full conviction of their recent loss, joined to the scattered lights in the later Prophets, together with other less legitimate helps, enabled them to gather and arrange their ideas in favour of a FUTURE STATE; as hath been shewn at large in the foregoing Books.

These *lights* Divine Providence, in its course, did indulge to them, till the *Sun of Righteousness* arose, lest the sudden splendour of his appearance should totally dazzle this blinded and devoted people; who, thus indulgently prepared and made fit to receive the Gospel, were, by their rejection of it, rendered totally without excuse.

These observations, the Reader sees, add further evidence to the Truths advanced in the former Books, concerning this EXTRAORDINARY PROVIDENCE.

The course of my Argument, in those Books, led me to deduce an equal administration of Providence in the Jewish State, from the Nature of its THEOCRACY. My Subject here leads me to shew, from the general ORDER of God's Moral Government, that this *equal Providence* was administered in the world at large, while it retained the memory of the true God; and was again administered in the Land of Judea, when, by the Mission of Moses, the true God had there regained his rights.

All this, when carefully considered, will, amongst a vareity of other reasoning, be one incontestible proof of the truth of REVEALED RELIGION. Here, in the MOSAIC, we find it so contrived, by divine Skill, that the peculiar Nature of that Economy, under a THEOCRACY, should coincide with, and concur to support, that very dispensation of Providence which naturally arose from the punishment of the FALL. This also will add strength and light to all my former reasoning, for the extension of this *extraordinary Providence* to PARTICULARS. For now it is seen, that this dispensation was not merely political and attendant on a *Theocracy*, where civil considerations often overlook the care of individuals; but it was a general dispensation of Religion, from the FALL to the

the time when idolatry overran the World: and was again administered when and where the knowledge and worship of the true God was restored.

"It is true (may an objector reply), that this *different* administration of Providence, between the faithful followers of the true God, and the careless apostates from his worship, did preserve the dignity due to God's Moral Government; yet still this difference appears to be so great, that it looks like an impeachment of the divine Attributes, to confine this benefit to such only, *who liked to retain God in their knowledge*, while the rest of Mankind were left and abandoned to the evils consequent on an irregular and unequal administration of Providence."

This objection would have weight, if those who were included under the Sentence passed on Adam should be irremissibly doomed to the short existence of this mortal life. But a secret REPRIEVE (kept hid, indeed, from the early world) passed along with the *Sentence of Condemnation*. So that they who never received their due in *this* World, would still be kept in existence till they had received it in the *next*: such being, in no other sense, sufferers by the administration of an unequal Providence, than in being ignorant of the reparation which attended them. For we learn, from sacred Writ (what the principles of natural Reason do not impeach) that the DEATH of Christ had a retrospect from the FALL of Adam; and that REDEMPTION was, from the first, amongst the principal Ingredients in God's Moral Government of Man.

Now, if the *goodness* of God thus provided for human *redemption*, that *goodness*, joined to his *justice*, would make the *redemption* as extensive as the forfeiture. But, in case a *retrospect* did not take place, it would not be thus extensive. More words would only obscure a truth, which the sacred text hath rendered so plain and clear.

Ye were redeemed (says St. Peter) *with the precious blood of Christ*, FOREORDAINED *from the foundation of the World, but was* MANIFEST *in these last times for you**. St. John explains, from the words of Jesus himself, what is to be understood by his being *foreordained*,

* 1 Peter i. 20.

viz.

viz. That it was receiving the *glory* which accompanies the entrance on an high office—*And now, O Father,* GLORIFY *me, with the* GLORY *which I had with thee before the World was. I have* MANIFESTED *thy name unto the men which thou gavest me out of the World**.

St. Peter, in the words above, distinguisheth between the *advent* of our *Redeemer*, and the *efficacy* of his death, in teaching us, that, though his MANIFESTATION was late, yet the virtue of his FOREORDAINED *Redemption* operated from the most early times. For it would be trifling to speak of a *pre-ordination*, which was not to be understood of a *pre-operation*; since those to whom the Apostle wrote well understood, from the Attributes of the Godhead, that all things *that were*, had been *pre-ordained*, in the simple sense of the word. The other sense, of a *pre-operation*, St. John more forcibly expresses, *by the Lamb* SLAIN *from the foundation of the World*†.

But if the course of God's various Dispensations required, that this *Act of grace*, the REDEMPTION, should be *kept hid for Ages*, and never fully revealed till the *Advent* of his SON, it could not be otherwise, than that, in the *intermediate Dispensations*, Mankind must be still represented as suffering under the forfeiture of Adam; in Scripture language called, *lying under the curse*. Nor had such of Adam's Posterity any cause to complain that the REDEMPTION was kept hid from them, since it was an Act of *Grace*, and not of *Debt*, of which they would finally, and in due time, have the benefit. In the interim, as hath been shewn above, the moral government of God, revealed to us in Scripture, was administered to them in such a manner, as, sooner or later, to proclaim its perfect equity.

CHAP. II.

IN this manner did the FREE GIFT OF IMMORTALITY become forfeit, by Man's violating the CONDITION on which it was bestowed. For a GIFT is not the less *free* by having a *condition* annexed unto it: the quality of a

* John xvii. 5, 6.

† Rev. xiii. 8. See also note [E] at the end of this Book.

free

free gift not arising from its being without *condition*, but from its being without a *claim of right*.

It is true, that a *Condition*, annexed to a *claim of right*, is of a different nature from *that* which the Governor of the world hath seen fit to annex to a *free gift*: the first ariseth out of the settled constitution of things; the second depends on arbitrary will and pleasure. Thus MORAL VIRTUE was the *condition* of that favour and protection which the *Creature*, Man, *claims* from his Maker; but the OBSERVANCE OF A POSITIVE COMMAND was the *condition* of the *free gift of immortality*.

Again, the *Law of Nature* informs us, that the *Condition*, which accompanies a *claim*, is, when unperformed, still capable of recovering its efficacy: the same *Law* likewise directs us to the *means*, namely REPENTANCE. But the violated Condition, annexed to a *free gift*, is not thus recoverable.

The reason of this difference is apparent. God's Creatures have a claim to his favour and protection, whenever, and as often as, the breach of the *Condition* is repaired by sincere *repentance*; because the relation between the Creator and Creature makes the *claim* indissolvable. But IMMORTALITY being a *free gift*, which gift that *relation* doth not naturally infer; when the condition, on which it was bestowed, is broken, the benefit is irrecoverably taken back. The consequence of which is, that if God, in his infinite goodness, shall be pleased to restore again that *free gift*, he may do it by what *means* he sees fit, as not being confined to *that* which his own establishment hath prescribed, for the recovery of his *favour* and *protection* simply.

The *means*, therefore, of regaining the *free gift of immortality*, when God had graciously decreed that it should be regained, can be only known by REVELATION.

Another specific difference between the *Conditions* annexed to a *grace*, and to a *claim*, is this, that as the condition of the former is the observance of an *arbitrary Command*, this Command may not be the same (though still arbitrary, as annexed to a *free gift*) when that grace is *restored*, with what it was in the *first donation*. It was not the same; as we shall see when we come to speak of the

the *condition of life and immortality* again *brought to light*. Where we shall, at the same time, be enabled to see God's gracious purpose in the *Change*.

But here let us always keep in mind (which not to do will occasion much confusion in handling the subject of REDEMPTION), that the MEANS of recovering a benefit lost, and the CONDITION annexed to that benefit, when recovered, are two very distinct and different things. Both of which, viz. of the MEANS and the CONDITION, we shall speak to in their Order.

And first of the MEANS; and to Whom intrusted.

The MEANS employed in this great Work, the REDEMPTION OF MANKIND, human reason alone was not sufficient to discover.

It may, indeed, be collected from the Principles of *Natural Religion* (as we have more than once observed, and cannot do it too often) that God, on the sincere repentance of Offenders, will receive them again into favour, and render them capable of those rewards *naturally* attendant on right behaviour. But the case before us is very different. The benefit lost by Adam's transgression was *a free gift*, a matter of grace. Our restoration, therefore, to that benefit must needs be of *grace* likewise; consequently, the *means* resided in the hidden counsels of the Bestower, and so not to be found in the promulged Digest of *Natural Law*.

He might have *restored* us, and certainly would, had he seen it best, on the common terms on which *Natural Religion* assureth us he will receive returning Sinners to his favour: or he might, with equal justice, in perfecting the great work of *Redemption*, require MORE; namely, a MEDIATION, enforced by some kind of SATISFACTION. But what his good pleasure was herein, it was impossible for human Reason to discover; whatever fitness that Reason may perceive in these MEANS, when revealed.

Indeed, had it been decent for falling Man, aided only by the glimmering light of that indefinite promise, that he should some time or other be restored to his lost inheritance; had it been decent, I say, to indulge his conjectures concerning the Counsels of the Most High, he would have been apt to think that a MEDIATOR might be employed amongst the *means* used in this *Restoration*; since

since he is able to see the same fitness of such an interposition in matters of *grace*, as of *repentance alone* in matters of *right*. MEDIATION implying a confession, that the thing requested is merely of *grace*; to the obtaining of which, Man doth no further co-operate than by his hopes and wishes.

How reasonable such a conclusion would have been we find by this, that the very MEANS, here supposed, have been, as we have said, in *fact*, used, and accepted by the God of our Salvation.—*For there is one God*, (says St. Paul) *and one* MEDIATOR *between God and Man, the Man Jesus Christ**.—*Jesus* (says the Author of the Epistle to the Hebrews) *is the* MEDIATOR *of a better Covenant, which was established upon better promises* †.

The modesty of *Reason* finds its account in Conclusions thus confirmed; and the Truth of *Scripture* receives light and strength from Conclusions thus made.

We are now to consider of the Person of this *Mediator*, and then enquire into the manner in which he discharged his *Mediation*.

The eternal Son of God, Jesus, the Messiah, was the Person appointed to this Office‡. The time of his appearance was foretold by the Jewish Prophets: and the nearer they lived to that time, the clearer and fuller were their intimations concerning the Character and Fortunes of him, who was sent to REDEEM Israel, and *to bring* again *to light* that *life and immortality* which was lost by the transgression of Adam.

The manner in which he was to discharge his MEDIATION, is our next enquiry: Whether he did it simply by INTERCEDING for the remission of the Forfeiture; or whether by SATISFYING, at the same time, for the Debt? is the Question. Now, as it rested in God's good pleasure, which of these he would accept, we must again have recourse to Scripture for information: where we find, that the *intercession* was by way of SATISFACTION for the Debt.

This *Satisfaction* is called in Scripture, REDEMPTION; a term taken from civil transactions amongst Men, where

* 1 Tim. ii. 5. † Heb. viii. 6.

‡ See note [F] at the end of this Book.

the

the things or persons *redeemed* were paid for, with a price. Hence St. Paul, speaking of our Redemption from the forfeiture of Adam, expresseth it by this Periphrasis, *Ye are bought with a price**.

The *price* paid was the DEATH of the Son of God. *Christ died for the ungodly*†, says he. And again, *Christ died for our Sins*‡—*he died for all*§—*to obtain salvation, our Lord Jesus Christ died for us*‖. On this account, and in allusion to the like transactions amongst Men, the *Redeemer* is called the LORD of those whom he *redeemed*—*For to this end* (says he) *Christ both died and rose and revived, that he might be the* LORD *both of the dead and living***.

And now let us proceed to the nature of that DEATH which had the efficacy of REDEMPTION.

1. First, it must be VOLUNTARY—*Hereby we perceive the love of God, because he laid down his life for us*††, says St. John.—*I lay down my life for the Sheep*, (saith Jesus himself) *no man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down; and I have power to take it again. This* COMMANDMENT *have I received of my Father*‡‡. Here he represents the *laying down his life* as a *power* bestowed, in consequence of a *Command* received. And this will lead us to consider

2. The second requisite of a *voluntary* death efficacious of *redemption*; which is, that it must be OFFERED UP, in consequence of pre-ordained *acceptance*, called, in the text, a COMMAND. And what is a religious *offering up* to God, but a SACRIFICE?

In this sense (the proper sense of the word,) the holy Scriptures expressly call the death of Christ a SACRIFICE, St. Paul speaking (as is his wont) in the Language of the Law §§, says,—*Christ our Passover is* SACRIFICED *for us*,

* 1 Cor. vi. 20. † Rom. v. 6. ‡ 1 Cor. xv. 3.
§ 2 Cor. v. 14. ‖ 1 Thess. v. 9, 10. ** Rom. xiv. 9.
†† 1 John iii. 16. ‡‡ John x. 15—18.

§§ To this an objector may reply,—*If St. Paul speaks in the Language of the Law*, why is not the word *Sacrifice* part of that language, as well as *Passover*? And if so, says such a one, your argument from this text, in proof of a *real Sacrifice*, is enervated. To this I answer, the *language of the law* may extend to *names* without extending to *things*. It plainly does so, here. The word *Passover*

*us**. The Writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews, who rarely speaks any other Language, says—*Christ needeth not daily, as those high Priests, to offer up* SACRIFICE, *first for his own sins, and then for the People's; for this he did once when he* OFFERED UP HIMSELF†. Again—*Christ hath appeared to put away sin, by the* SACRIFICE OF HIMSELF‡. And again—*He was once* OFFERED *to bear the sins of many* §.

But the virtue of *expiatory Sacrifices* consisted in procuring ATONEMENT, by some sort of SATISFACTION. And thus the expiatory Sacrifice of Christ on the Cross operated for our REDEMPTION.

One could hardly have thought it possible, that any Man, who had read the *Gospels*, with their best Interpreters, the Authors of the *Epistles*, should ever have entertained a doubt, WHETHER THE DEATH OF CHRIST WAS A REAL SACRIFICE?

But mistaken notions, concerning the *origin* and *nature* of this sacred Rite, have so obscured the *Rationale* of it, that the SOCINIANS, who boast to have interpreted Scripture on the severest and justest Laws of Logic and Criticism, have, in this instance, as well as in many others, deviated more from these Laws than the most licentious of the *Allegorists*, or the wildest of the *Spiritualizers*. Here, in their care to avoid an imaginary absurdity, they have fallen into a real one, and of the grossest kind, while they consider the *death of Christ* as nothing more than THE SEAL OF HIS MISSION. For, were this all, so bloody an Impression might have been well spared; since the *proper Seal of his Mission*, or the evidence of his being SENT, were MIRACLES performed and PROPHECIES fulfilled. His DYING, if it were only in support of what he taught, could be nothing more than the *seal of his Integrity*.

But ignorance of the ORIGIN AND NATURE OF SACRIFICE hath misled these our *Rationalists* into the gross and semi-pagan errors concerning the *Rite* itself.

And

is language peculiar to the *Law*: the word SACRIFICE, though the language of the *Law*, is not peculiar to it, but in use throughout the whole religious World to denote a *Rite*, common, at that time, to all Men.

* 1 Cor. v. 7. † Heb. vii. 27. ‡ Heb. ix. 26. § Heb. ix. 28.

And therefore it will be expedient to give (though it may prove a work of some length and labour) an enlarged History of this whole matter.

As SACRIFICE is almost coeval with the human Race, its nature and supposed effects depend on the knowledge of its *Original*; which is only to be found in the notions, habits, and customs of the first mortals.

The PRINCIPLE advanced in the fourth Section of the fourth Book of this work, together with the reasoning on that *Principle* concerning the ANCIENT MODE OF CONVERSE BY ACTION IN AID OF WORDS, will lead us (so prolific is that Principle, in laying open the most secret treasures of Antiquity) to the true *rationale* of this widely extended, and as widely mistaken, *Rite of Sacrifice*. This will shew, how the common sentiments of our Nature would draw the first Men into this mode of worship, whether the SACRIFICE was EUCHARISTICAL, PROPITIATORY, or EXPIATORY. Under one or other of these Classes, I suppose, all sorts of *Sacrifice* may be reasonably comprised. Though the Egyptians, we are told, extended the number to six hundred sixty and six. But their Sacrifices, like their Kings, were wantonly multiplied at pleasure, in defiance of time and truth, to fit the purpose of every fabling or designing Priest. For, the Sentiments which nature and reason excite in every pious breast towards the Author and Support of our Being, are simply these, *Gratitude* for good bestowed; *Application* to him for good sought or wanted; and *Repentance* for, and deprecation of, Crimes committed.

1. Gratitude gave birth to *Eucharistical Sacrifice*. And this duty was, in the most early times, discharged in EXPRESSIVE ACTION; the least equivocal of which was, the Offerer's bringing the first fruits of Pasturage or Agriculture, to that sequestered place, where the Deity used to be more solemnly invoked, at the stated times of religious Worship; and there, presenting them in homage, with a demeanour which spoke to this purpose—"I do hereby acknowledge thee, O my God! "to be the Author and giver of all good: and do now, "with humble gratitude, return my warmest thanks "for these thy blessings, particularly bestowed upon "me."

Things, thus devoted, became, from thenceforth, sacred. And to prevent their *desecration*, the readiest way was to send them to the Table of the Priest, or to consume them in the fire of the Altar.

2. The PROPITIATORY SACRIFICE was *precatory*, to implore success to their labours, in order to procure and improve to their use these common blessings of Providence; and *deprecatory*, to avert the evils due to the past abuse of such blessings. And in this species of Sacrifice, likewise, the oblation was so contrived as to be an *Action* equally expressive of an invocation for the continuance of God's favour; and for the remission of the Offerer's transgressions.

3. But it is the third Sort, the EXPIATORY SACRIFICE, which, by reason of the horrid abuses it early underwent, hath obscured the whole face of things: yet the luciferous Principle, here applied, to illustrate this whole matter, shews EXPIATORY SACRIFICE to be, in its nature, as intelligible, and in practice as rational, as either of the other two. Here, instead of presenting the first fruits of agriculture and pasturage, in corn, wine, oil and wool, as in the *eucharistical*, or a portion of what was to be sown or otherwise propagated, as in the *propitiatory*; some chosen Animal, precious to the repenting Criminal, who deprecates, or supposed to be obnoxious to the Deity, who is to be appeased, was offered up and slain at the Altar, in an Action, which, in all languages, when translated into words, speaks to this purpose,—"I con-"fess my transgressions at thy footstool, O my God!" "and, with the deepest contrition, implore thy pardon; "confessing that I deserve death for these my offences." —The latter part of the Confession was more forcibly expressed by the *Action* of striking the devoted animal, and depriving it of life; which, when put into words, concluded in this manner—"And I own that I myself "deserve the death which I now inflict on this Animal."

But here it will be proper to observe, that as crimes of a lighter complexion were atoned for, as well as deprecated in the *propitiatory Sacrifice*; so those of a deeper die could be only blotted out by the *expiatory*. This frequently brought into both the slaughter, or at least the consecration of a devoted animal, by an action which spoke

spoke alike in each; but louder in the *expiatory*; while, in all the *three*, the *action of Sacrifice* still expressed a reasonable language.

But this system of Sacrifice, so well supported by what we know of plain and simple Nature, in its most early movements, is further realized by what Historians tell us was pronounced by the mouth of the Sacrificer himself; who frequently explained his own action by the words with which he accompanied it.

We learn from Antiquity, that when friendly or adverse States had entered into an alliance for mutual defence, or ended a war on mutual conditions, the League was solemnized by the two parties with the additional Sanction of a SACRIFICE, in its nature chiefly partaking of that species we call *Propitiatory*; to implore a blessing on the transaction.

The Historian, Livy, hath recorded the Ceremonies in use, in these Sorts of Sacrifice; where, speaking of a Treaty concluded between the Roman and Alban People, on certain conditions mutually agreed upon, he tells us, that the Public person, on the part of Rome, whom we may call the *King at arms*, and who was the sacrificing Priest, when about to strike the Victim, thus invocates their common God, in an address to the Alban People, and their chief Heralds—"Legibus deinde recitatis, Audi, "inquit, *Jupiter*; audi *Pater patrate* Populi Albani; "audi tu Populus Albanus; ut illa palam prima postrema ex illis Tabulis Cerave recitata sunt, sine dolo "malo, utique ea hic hodie rectissime intellecta sunt, illis "Legibus Populus Romanus prior non deficiet. Si prior "defexit publico Consilio dolo malo, TU ILLO DIE, "JUPITER, POPULUM ROMANUM SIC FERITO, UT EGO "HUNC PORCUM HIC HODIE FERIAM TANTOQUE MAGIS FERITO *quanto magis potes pollesque: Id ubi dixit, "porcum saxo silice percussit**."

Another Treaty concluded between Hannibal and his Army of multifarious *Adventurers* was, the same historian tells us, sanctified in the like manner. Just before the battle of Trebia, the General, encouraging his Followers, by all the usual excitements, to do their duty, concludes with a promise of the most magnificent spoils, as

* Liv. l. i. c. 24.

the reward of their valour. And then offering one of those *propitiatory* Sacrifices for himself and his army; the better to induce the various nations, of which it was composed, to confide in his word, and rest assured of his good faith, he held out a Lamb ready for the Altar, and then proceeded in the following manner—" Eaque ut " rata scirent fore, Agnum læva manu, dextra silicem " retinens, SI FALLERET, JOVEM CÆTEROSQUE PRE- " CATUS DEOS ITA SE MACTARENT QUEMADMODUM " IPSE AGNUM MACTASSET. *Secundum precationem,* " *Caput pecudis saxo elisit**."

We see the reason, why in these religious Acts, when made the Sanction of good faith, in public and civil conventions, the expressive *action* should be further ascertained by *Words*. It was necessary, in an affair of public and general importance, to give the utmost precision to the Act, by removing from it all doubtful or equivocal meaning.

Again, it is further worth our notice, that, although THE SPEAKING BY ACTION had (as we have shewn) its original in the defects and imperfections of early language; yet, even when those impediments to fuller information were in a good measure removed, still, partly from habit and custom, but principally from some advantages which this mode of converse had above the other, of speech, it was (as has been observed elsewhere) long kept up amongst People of simpler manners, especially in the more solemn transactions of life; of which those relating to religion were the chief: by reason, that *significative actions* make a stronger and more durable impression than *words*; as the Eye is a more certain and steady conveyance of intelligence than the Ear.

On the whole, the Reader now sees, that nothing could be more natural, intelligible, or rational, than *this mode of religious Worship*, as here explained.

Ignorance of all this, and inattention to the state and condition of ancient times, have divided *Believers* into two parties on this subject.

One of them holds, that the origin of Sacrifices was by *command from Heaven*; the other, that it sprung from *Superstition*, together with many the like absurd practices.

* Liv. lib. xxi. c. 45.

The

The first call this religious Rite, *Mysterious:* and so give to *Heaven* what, in their opinion, *Reason* disclaims. *As to the origin of Sacrifices*, (says a learned Divine) *it is extremely hard to conceive them to be a human Institution*; BECAUSE *we cannot give any tolerable account of the* REASONS *of them* *. A more than *tolerable*, even a plain and clear *reason*, the Reader sees is now given. But men are always disposed to find in themselves a standard for the measure of all things. However, admit *Sacrifice* to be devoid of *Reason*; must things, thus circumstanced, needs come from Heaven? As if nothing had ever entered into Religion that was of the growth of Superstition! What will be the consequence of thus accounting for what we do not understand, but the disposing men to think, that every religious Rite, though palpably absurd, yet, if fancifully *mysterious*, had that original?

Another argument, which this more orthodox Party urge for their Opinion, that Sacrifice must needs be heavenly-derived, is, perhaps, something more plausible, but equally inconclusive: It is the *very early use of Sacrifice*, which rises as high as the two Sons of Adam. And, indeed, our account of this *significative action* shews, that we can conceive no time, after the *Fall*, too early for its introduction amongst men, under the guidance and government of *natural Religion*, as these two Brothers certainly were. Besides, the defects of language, while in its early rudiments, necessarily occasioned this *mode* of intercourse between Man and his Maker. Yet, notwithstanding, Primæval use can never prove *Sacrifice* to have arisen from any other source than the light of *natural reason*. And if that be sufficient (as we have shewn it is), we must needs conclude that it arose from thence, when Scripture is silent concerning any other source. Especially since we find that this Scripture hath carefully recorded what *God* immediately, and not *nature*, taught to Adam and his Family. Now, concerning *Sacrifice*, there is not a single word which implies any such instruction. On the contrary, the manner in which the story is told leads us to conclude, that the Rite was first dictated by *natural reason.—Abel was a keeper of*

* Shuckford.

*sheep, but Cain was a Tiller of the ground. And in process of time it came to pass, that Cain brought of the fruit of the ground, an offering unto the Lord. And Abel he brought of the firstling of his flock**.—*And* IN PROCESS OF TIME (says the Historian) IT CAME TO PASS, &c. words, which (in the sequel) not only acquaint us with the first Sacrificers, but in these, here quoted, strongly intimate, that the *Rite* was of human original. While, throughout the whole narrative, we find no mention of any prescribed mode of *Patriarchal Sacrifice*, though Moses is most minute in what concerns the prescribed Sacrifices of the LAW. Doth not this shew, that the first was a voluntary, uncommanded Worship, where the *mode* was left to the discretion of the Worshipper; and the latter a *prescribed* Rite, where every circumstance, in the celebration, was to be scrupulously observed?

Nor is this reasoning to be evaded by the confessed brevity of the sacred Historian. For had the Original of Sacrifice been prescribed, and directly commanded by the Deity, Moses could never have omitted the express mention of that circumstance. The two capital Observances in the Jewish Ritual were the SABBATH and SACRIFICES.—To impress the highest reverence and veneration on the *Sabbath*, the Historian is careful to record its divine original in these words—*Thus the Heavens and the Earth were finished, and all the Host of them. And on the seventh day, God ended his Work, which he had made: and he* RESTED ON THE SEVENTH DAY *from all his work which he had made: and* GOD BLESSED THE SEVENTH DAY, AND SANCTIFIED IT; *because that in it, he had rested from all his Work, which God created and made*†. Now, who can suppose, that, had SACRIFICE been of divine Original, Moses would have neglected to establish this truth, at the time that he recorded the other? Since it was of equal use, and of equal importance, with the other. I should have said of much greater: for the multifarious *Sacrifices* of the LAW had not only a reference to the *forfeiture* of Adam, but likewise prefigured our *Redemption* by Jesus Christ, as we shall shew hereafter.

The other mistaken extreme, arising from the same

* Gen. iv. 2. † Gen. ii. 2, 3.

cause,

cause, namely, ignorance of the nature of Sacrifice, is amongst those Believers, who hold, that although Sacrifice became, at length, of *divine right*, yet, in its Origin, it was but a capricious Ordinance of human invention; concerning which, no rational or philosophic account can be given; yet, having spread wide, and struck its roots deep into the fat and lumpish Soil of Superstition, it was suffered, by God, to occupy a place in the Mosaic Institution, in compliance with the prejudices of a perverse and barbarous People, to whom many other extraneous Rites (perhaps irrational, but certainly harmless) were indulged.

And now, to go on with our History of Sacrifice. This important Rite, first dictated by natural reason, did not long continue in its original integrity.

Of all the customs in use amongst Men, those respecting Religion are most liable to abuse. For the passions of HOPE and FEAR become then most inordinate when the Mind is taken up and occupied in the offices of divine Worship. At this season, the sobriety of common sense is often forced to give way to the extravagance of the imagination. And this more especially must have been the case in those early Ages, when undisciplined REASON was but just projecting how to curb the irregular sallies of Enthusiasm.

Add to this, that SACRIFICE being a *Scenical* Rite, it was principally fitted to strike the Fancy; which delighting in paradox and Mystery, would riot in this enchanted ground, till it had lost sight of the simple meaning of a plain expressive action, first conceived for *use*, and continued out of *necessity*.

Under this state of delusion, *Eucharistical* and *propitiatory* Sacrifices were soon imagined to receive their chief value from the *costliness* of the offering; and HECATOMBS were supposed more acceptable to Heaven, than purity of mind, adorned with gratitude, and humble reliance on the Deity.

Amidst these disorders, *Philosophers* and *Moralists* might, from time to time, cry out, and ask, as they did, but without being heard,

" Dicite, Pontifices, in Sacro quid facit Aurum?
" Quin damus id Superis, de magna quod dare lance

" Non

"Non possit magni Messalæ lippa propago:
"Compositum jus, fasque animi sanctosque recessus
"Mentis, et incoctum generoso pectus honesto?
"Hæc cedo, ut admoveam Templis, et farre litabo*."—

The world went on its Train; *and pomp of Sacrifice* was every where preferred to the *piety of the Offerer.*

But in *expiatory* Sacrifices, matters went still worse. For, in these, the passion of FEAR being predominant, strange enormities were soon superadded to the follies of the Worshippers.

In these, the offering of the slain animal began, first of all, to be vainly considered as a VICARIOUS ATONEMENT for the crimes of the Sacrificer.

Though, in the purity of the first institution of Sacrifice, *striking* the devoted animal was an action naturally significative; which (as we said,) when reduced to words, contained no more than this humble and contrite recognition—*I confess, O my God! that I deserve death for my transgressions.*

Modern Unbelievers, to get to their favourite point, which was to arraign the Mosaic Ritual for its *vicarious atonements*, have been very large in exposing this abuse in the offices of *pagan* or of *natural* Religion, corrupted. "Right reason (say they) disclaims all such atonements; and teaches, that to secure pardon for our offences against God, no more is required than humble confession before the throne of Grace, joined to a sincere purpose of amendment; so that all the *Mosaic*, as well as Pagan Sacrifices, which went on the idea of a *vicarious atonement*, were merely human inventions of fraud or superstition."

But this charge against the LAW is founded either in ignorance or in ill faith. For though it may be true, that, by the *Law of Nature*, all *vicarious atonement* by Sacrifice is superfluous and absurd; yet, by the *Law of Moses*, it was rendered just and rational; for though this *Law* was founded, as all God's revelations are, on *natural Religion*, yet the Law, built thereupon, is conceived on the Principle of a FREE GIFT, long since forfeited by the breach of the Condition on which it was bestowed. This Principle, together with the *loss*, intimates the *recovery*.

* Pers. Satyr. II.

And

And further, in the institution of the *Rites of Sacrifice*, instructs us in the *means* employed for the recovery; *means* peculiar, and properly adapted, to the nature of a *free gift*.

We have already given, and shall further explain and justify, those *means* (namely, the VICARIOUS ATONEMENT, in the SACRIFICE ON THE CROSS, with its dependencies), on the grounds of Natural Reason and Religion.

To free, therefore, the *vicarious atonements*, in the Mosaic Sacrifices, from this Objection of our PHILOSOPHERS, it will be sufficient to observe these two things:

1. First, that the Mosaic Sacrifices were TYPES (and by both the Dispensations of the *Law* and *Gospel* declared to be so) of the great vicarious Sacrifice of the Cross: So that the justification of their use depends on their Prototype; whose conformity to right reason and equity will be shewn.

2. But then, in the second place, as these *Types* had a MORAL IMPORT*, that is, bore a temporal sense likewise, having a relation to the peculiar benefits enjoyed under a THEOCRACY, and so, of consequence, were not *Types* merely and solely of things to come, and to be transacted in another System, it will be necessary, in order to their full justification against the objections of our adversaries, to shew, that the *peculiar* benefits given by the LAW were of the nature of a FREE GIFT, like that of *immortality*, which was first bestowed on, and soon after lost by Adam in *Paradise*, and recovered by Jesus Christ in the *Gospel*. Between which two Dispensations the LAW *came in* (as an intermediate Revelation), and the benefits *peculiar* to the LAW (namely, extraordinary *temporal blessings*) were so far of the nature of the FREE GIFT of immortality (their prototype), as to make the MEANS of reconciliation for the violated condition attendant on such a *Gift*, different from what is required for the transgressions which natural Religion condemns.

Thus have we put a fair end to this formidable objection, conceived in ignorance, and brought forth in iniquity.

* See these terms explained in the 6th Book, p. 33, et seq. of this volume.

But

But this is not all. The sacred Volume, which contains the Principles whereon *vicarious atonements* are justified, under the *Mosaic Law*, at the same time instructs us, that, by the LAW OF NATURE, a *vicarious atonement by sacrifice* is superstitious and absurd.

Moses, in pity of his People (whose idolatry, during his short absence, had so incensed the God of Israel, as to make it apprehended, by their Leader, that they would be totally abandoned, if not instantly destroyed), transported with the patriot passion, and misled by the Principles he had brought from Egypt, concerning VICARIOUS DEVOTEMENTS, thus addresses the Lord:—*Yet now, if thou wilt, forgive their sins: and if not, blot me, I pray thee, out of thy Book which thou hast written.* To this the God of Israel replies (but on the principles of his own prior *Law*, the LAW OF NATURE; the *Ritual Law* being already planned, indeed, but not given and received),—"WHOEVER HATH SINNED AGAINST ME, HIM *will I blot out of my book**." As much as to say, "The *Law of Nature* allows not of *vicarious atone-*"*ments*; but ordains, that the man who transgresseth "shall himself bear the punishment of his iniquity; a "punishment which no man deserves for the faults of "another, unless he be partaker of the guilt, by joining "in the transgression."

But self-love, aided by superstition, made men seek for pardon of their own Sins in the sufferings of others. When God gave the *Law of Nature*, he did not permit his Creatures to change the means he had ordained for pardon and reconciliation. But when he ordained the *Mosaic Law*, by which many benefits of *mere grace*, as well as others of *Debt*, were bestowed, he might, for breaches in the condition annexed to those of *mere grace*, well and equitably make the terms of pardon *different* from those he had before established for breaches in the condition annexed to those of *Debt*.

Thus we see how REVELATION triumphs; while every attack upon it produceth, in some new discovery of the amazing Wisdom in the various parts of the Dispensation, some further evidence of its Truth and Divinity. We have shewn with what superior sagacity, as well as

* Exod. xxx. 32, 33.

indulgence,

indulgence, many harmless practices of Gentilism were introduced into the Mosaic Ritual. But to manifest to the World what use divine Wisdom can make even of the worst rubbish of Paganism, VICARIOUS SACRIFICES condemned by the *Law of Nature*, as absurd and superstitious, it changed, when brought into the Mosaic Ritual, their very nature; and, in that revealed System, made them provisionary and reasonable.

And now, again, to proceed. A deep-rooted *Superstition* is always spreading wide and more wide. When men, thus labouring under this evil, had (in order to give themselves ease) gone so far as to indulge the fancy of a *vicarious Sacrifice*, it was natural for them, to think of enhancing so cheap an *atonement* by the cost and rarity of the *offering*. And oppressed with their malady, they never rested till they had got to that which they conceived to be the most precious of all, A HUMAN SACRIFICE. Nay, to accumulate the merit of the service by bringing it still nearer home, the madness did not cease to rage till it terminated in INFANTICIDE, or in offering up to their grim idols (instead of themselves) the CHILDREN of their bowels. We learn from *Sanchoniathon*, in that inestimable fragment of Antiquity, translated by *Philobiblius*, that what is here collected from the natural course of things, is realized by fact. *It was customary in ancient times* (says the fragment) *in great and public calamities, before things became incurable, for Princes and Magistrates to offer up in sacrifice to the avenging Demons, the dearest of their Offspring**. Under the fanatic fury of the high efficacy of this *atonement*, we need not wonder that the strongest instincts of Nature should be subdued, and even their very impressions effaced in this horrid sacrifice, when we reflect that mere *civil custom*, to avoid only a probable, nay, but a possible, inconvenience, was, in those early times, of force enough to erase, even out of the best cultivated minds, the innate *love of Parents for their Children*, and to introduce a general practice of *exposing* them, at their birth, to almost

* Apud Euseb. Præp. Evang. l. iv. p. 158,—ἦθος ἦν τοῖς παλαιοῖς, ἐν ταῖς μεγάλαις συμφοραῖς τῶν κινδύνων, ἀπὸ τῆς πάντων φθορᾶς τὸν ἠγαπημένον τῶν τέκνων τοὺς κρατοῦντας ἢ πόλεως ἢ ἔθνος, εἰς σφαγὴν ἐπιδιδόναι λύτρον τοῖς τιμωροῖς δαίμοσι, κατεσφάττετο δὲ οἷ δεδόμενοι μυστικῶς.

inevitable

inevitable destruction. What power then must this magic of custom acquire, when joined to dire Superstition, under the horror of approaching vengeance, to dispose the terrified Supplicant to offer up his own kind to avert it; nay, to make all sure, his own offspring, not only with indifference, but with alacrity.

This seems to have been the true original of HUMAN SACRIFICE *: An infernal practice, which soon overspread the World, barbarous and civil. For that LOVE and FEAR of God, implanted in our Nature to improve and perfect HUMANITY, do, when become degenerate by fanatic and servile passions, make as speedy a progress in dishonouring and debasing it.

From this HISTORY of the origin, use, and abuse of SACRIFICE, thus delivered, on the principles of Nature and Reason, and verified by Fact, I have deduced, and, with the fullest evidence, established the following truths.

1. First, That the mode of Religious Worship by SACRIFICE, is in itself, A REASONABLE SERVICE.

2. Secondly, That Sacrifice for sin was a fit atonement, and reasonably required in the Dispensations both of *natural* and *revealed* Religion, as a proper means of reconciling sinful man to his offended Master.

3. Thirdly, That this species of it, which is most open to objection, the VICARIOUS SACRIFICE, is founded in Reason, when directed to the *Mosaic* and *Christian* Systems; how abusive and absurd soever, when practised in the offices of *Paganism*.

Nothing but *this history of Sacrifice* could lay open the way to these Truths: And nothing but these Truths could let us into the true System of GOSPEL REDEMPTION. For till it was shewn that a VICARIOUS ATONEMENT, a thing of the essence of this System, is consonant to our most rational ideas of the divine attributes; it might be thought, by those who only saw the abuse, and were ignorant of the genuine use of *vicarious atonement*, that our proving the death of Christ to be a REAL SACRIFICE, was only adding one embarrass more in the road of *Revelation*, instead of removing (as was my intention) a great many that ignorance hath laid across it.

* See note [G] at the end of this Book.

But

But having now obviated the SOCINIAN objection to this species of Sacrifice, we may proceed without further impediment to establish this capital Principle of the Christian Faith, THE SACRIFICE OF CHRIST ON THE CROSS FOR THE REDEMPTION OF MANKIND.

1. Which will be done, first of all, by shewing that the *precious death upon the Cross* was, for many ages, *prefigured*, and, in a scenical manner, *foretold* by the SACRIFICES OF THE LAW; and more particularly and circumstantially by those *Sacrifices* called PIACULAR and VICARIOUS.

2. And secondly, by shewing that this DEATH was kept in perpetual memory under the Christian Dispensation, by a SACRED RITE, instituted by the Divine Victim himself, on his going to be offered; this *Rite* being (to speak properly) nothing but, nor other than, A FEAST UPON A SACRIFICE.

I. All Christian Churches, even the *Socinian*, agree in this, that the Sacrifices of the Jewish Law served, amongst other uses, for TYPES of the *death of Christ*, particularly those Sacrifices called *vicarious*, *piacular*, and *expiatory*. Of which, some prefigured one part of that tremendous transaction, and some another.—The victim burnt without the Camp foretold his sufferings without the City—The blood sprinkled in the *Sanctum Sanctorum* by the High Priest, on the day of expiation, prefigured our entrance into heaven, whither Christ prepared the way for us by his blood—The sacrifice of the Paschal Lamb, which was both *piacular* and *eucharistical*, proclaimed the innocence of our Redeemer, and the universal benefit of his blood to Mankind.

To set this matter in the clearest light—As to the simple rite of SACRIFICE, this was not peculiar to Judaism. It was in use, as we have shewn, from the beginning. Nature dictated this Symbol to all her Children: It being nothing else than a species of Worship, in *action* instead of *words*; so that *sacrifice* and *religious worship* were correlative and coeval ideas. The particular thing which Moses indulged to his people, for the *hardness of their hearts*, was that *multifarious Ritual*, of which, indeed, Sacrifice makes a capital part.

Amongst the various causes of the *Mosaic Ritual*, the principal were these:

1. First, A necessity of complying with those inveterate prejudices (least liable to idolatrous abuse) which a long abode in Egypt had induced: amongst the chief was their attachment to SACRIFICE; a species of divine worship, which, at this time, made almost the whole of Religion in the Egyptian world. These people (as hath been observed before) reckoning up six hundred and sixty-six sorts of *sacrifice*.

2. A second cause of the Mosaic Ritual was to debar the people from their too ready entrance to Idolatry, by keeping them continually occupied in the performance of their sacred Rites to the GOD OF ISRAEL; whose NAME, when lost in all other places, was, by their SEPARATION, to be preserved in the land of Judea, till *the fulness of time should come*.

3. A third was to PREFIGURE, by these Rites of Sacrifice, the DEATH OF CHRIST UPON THE CROSS: For the *Mosaic Religion* being the foundation of, and preparatory to, the *Christian*, it was fit and proper to connect these two parts of God's moral Dispensation, in such a manner that their mutual relation might, in a proper time, become evident to all men. For in two Religions related to each other, as the MEANS and the END, the FOUNDATION and the SUPERSTRUCTURE, nothing can be more conformable to our ideas of Divine Wisdom, than its contriving some ties which might establish the knowledge, and perpetuate the memory of that close relation, without immaturely explaining the particulars of it. Now what can be conceived more effectual for this purpose than to make the RITES of the *one* Religion TYPICAL, that is, declarative and expressive of the general *nature* of the *other*.

These various uses of SACRIFICE in the Mosaic Ritual cannot but raise our admiration of the divine Wisdom, which hath so contrived, that the very Worship indulged to the Israelites, in compassion to their childish prejudices, should not only prevent the abuses, the natural effect of those prejudices which led to idolatry, but, at the same time, should establish and proclaim, by means of their TYPICAL representations, a strong and lasting

connexion between the two Religions. *Representations* so apposite to this end and purpose, that all the sects and parties in Christianity, how widely soever they differ amongst themselves in other matters, agree in this, that *the sacrifices of the Law*, besides the other uses in the Mosaic institution, are TYPICAL OF THE DEATH OF CHRIST *. So far, we say, all the Christian Churches, even the SOCINIAN, agree with us. In this, they differ; they pretend, that though the *Jewish Sacrifices* prefigured the death of Christ, as *Types* of it, yet it does not follow that *his death* was a *real Sacrifice*, like the Jewish. On the contrary, we affirm, that this alone is sufficient to shew, that if the *Type* was a *real Sacrifice*, the Antitype must be so likewise. For (to enter a little more particularly into this mode of representation) a TYPE differs from a SYMBOL in this, that the Type represents something *future*; the *Symbol*, something *past* or *present*.—The commanded Sacrifice of Isaac was given for a *Type*; the Sacrifices of the *Law* were *Types*. The Images of the Cherubims over the Propitiatory were *Symbols*; the bread and wine in the last Supper were *Symbols*.

So far they agree in their *genus*, that they are equally REPRESENTATIONS; but in their *species*, they differ widely.

It is not required that the *Symbol* should partake of the *nature* of the thing represented: the Cherubims shadowed out the celerity of Angels, but not by any physical celerity of their own; the bread and wine shadowed out the body and blood of Christ, but not by any change in the Elements.

But *Types* being, on the contrary, representations of *things future*, and so partaking of the nature of *Prophecy*, were to convey information concerning the *nature* of the *Antitypes*, or of the things represented; which they could not do, but by the exhibition of their own nature.

Hence we collect, that the command to offer Isaac, being the command to offer a *real Sacrifice*, the death and sufferings of Christ, thereby represented, was a *real Sacrifice*. And the piacular and vicarious Sacrifices of the LAW being *real Sacrifices*, the Death on the Cross was a *real Sacrifice* likewise.

* See what hath been said of the logical and natural propriety of *Types* and *secondary senses*, Book vi. § 6.

Were this otherwise, the *Type*, as a *Type*, would contain more than was contained in the *Antitype*. An absurdity, which makes the *Shadow* convey more than the *Substance*; when, by its very nature, it should convey less. On this Truth, the reasoning in the Epistle to the Hebrews is founded—"Christ, (says the Apostolic "Writer) was once *offered* to bear the sins of many. "For the *Law* having the SHADOW of good things to "come, and not the VERY IMAGE of the things, can "never with those *Sacrifices*, which they offered, year by "year, continually, make the comers thereunto perfect: "for then would they not have ceased to be offered *."

The Jewish Sacrifices are here called SHADOWS, not in an absolute, but in a comparative sense. The *Type* is inferior to the *Antitype*, just as, in visible things, a natural *shadow* is to an artificial *image*. For the *Typical* Sacrifices of the *Law*, having, besides their property of *Types*, a MORAL IMPORT, (and not like the Typical Sacrifice commanded to be offered by Abraham, *a mere shadow without any moral import*) are called *Shadows*, not in opposition to realities (for having a *moral import*, they are *realities*); but called *Shadows*, only in comparison to the vast disparity between the virtues of the *Types* and the *Antitype*, thus explained and enforced by the same inspired Writer—"For if the blood of bulls "and of goats, and the ashes of an heifer, sprinkling the "unclean, sanctifieth to the *purifying of the flesh*, HOW "MUCH MORE shall the blood of Christ, who *offered* "himself without spot to God, *purge your conscience* "from dead works to serve the living God †?"

Again, though, from hence, it appears that these *Types* with the *Antitype* are occupied in the elucidation of the same great subject, yet it will not follow, that every several *Type* is equally expressive of the Antitype. Some of them shall present a more perfect image of the *Antitype* than others; yet they do not exclude the most imperfect from a share in the honour of so august a representation. For though the divine Author of the System had ordained, that the whole of the Jewish Ritual, concerning Sacrifices, should *typify* or prefigure the great SACRIFICE OF

* Heb. ix. 28.—x. 1, 2. See Book vi. § 6. of the Divine Legation.
† Heb. ix. 13, 14.

CHRIST;

CHRIST; yet as those *Sacrifices*, at the same time, constituted an essential part of the Mosaic economy, which, on several occasions, I have expressed more generally by the terms of their bearing a MORAL IMPORT, it could not but be that some would carry *fainter* and others *stronger*, *shadows* or *images* of what as *Types* they represented; just as the various Jewish service, in its moral nature, afforded more or less occasions of evidence. Thus, the *Type* of the *Paschal Lamb* was a more perfect representation, than the *Type* of the *Victim burnt without the Camp*.

It might, and probably would have been otherwise, had these Types borne *no moral import*, like the command to offer Isaac; for then nothing could have hindered all the *Types* from being as complete representations of the *Antitype* as that *command to Abraham* was; and if nothing hindered, it is reasonable to suppose, it would have been done.

We have observed, that these *Types*, in the Mosaic Ritual, were a kind of *Prophecy by action*; in which Providence was pleased to manifest to the world, the real connexion between the Jewish and the Christian Revelations. But this was not all. The other sort of Prophecy was not wanting, which, by way of eminence, has commonly assumed the *name*, viz. The written Predictions of the Jewish Prophets. Where, in a detailed account of the PROMISED MESSIAH, the principal part relates to his death and sufferings on the Cross, under the idea of a SACRIFICE. And if, as hath been pretended, these things relate to *Jesus* only in a *secondary sense*, and to the Jewish Leaders in a *primary*; this would only make the analogy between these two kinds of Prediction more complete, and the connexion between the two Religions more strong and durable. For the Jewish Sacrifices, though as *types* they refer *ultimately* to Christ, yet as a religious service not typical, they had, like Prophecy, a prior reference to the LAW. So admirable is this coincidence between these two sorts of *prediction*. As to the logical and moral fitness of SECONDARY SENSES, I have explained that matter at large in the former parts of this work *.

* See Book vi. §. 6.

Hitherto in support of the Doctrine of the GREAT SACRIFICE ON THE CROSS. And this alone seems abundantly sufficient to establish it.

But this is not the whole. It was not only FORETOLD by the Types and other Prophecies of the *old Law*, but the Remembrance of it was PERPETUATED by a divine Institution in the *new*: and an explanation of this Rite is the last step we shall take to fix this fundamental Article of our holy Faith.

In those Ages of the World *, when Victims made a principal part of the Religion both of Jews and Gentiles, the *Sacrifice* was commonly followed by a religious Feast on the thing offered, called *a Feast upon, or after, the Sacrifice*; the partakers of which were supposed to become partakers of the BENEFITS of the Sacrifice. In allusion to this custom, Jesus was pleased to institute a Feast of the same kind.—In order of time, indeed, the *Feast* naturally *followed* the *Sacrifice*. But in this great Atonement, where the VICTIM, the OFFERER, and the PRIEST, were all one and the same Person, the *Feast* was, of necessity, to *precede* the Sacrifice.

The History of this institution is recorded by the Evangelists, in these words:—"And as they were eating, Jesus took bread, and blessed it, and gave it to his "disciples, and said, Take, eat: THIS IS MY BODY. And "he took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, "saying, Drink ye all of it; for THIS IS MY BLOOD of "the New Testament, which is shed for many, for the "remission of sins." Matt. xxvi, 26—28.

Now, to manifest that we are not mistaken in the idea here given of this Rite, let us reflect on the precise time of its celebration.

As Jesus, with his Disciples, (says the text) was concluding the Paschal Supper, which was a Jewish *Feast after the Sacrifice*, his own approaching Sacrifice naturally suggested to him the idea of this *customary Feast*. But being himself both the *Victim* and the *Offerer*, the Institution of this Rite must of necessity, as we observed, *precede* the *Sacrifice*—The *Sacrifice on the Cross* was the *Antitype* of the *Paschal Lamb*; and the *Feast* on Christ's

* See the Discourse on the Nature and End of the Lord's Supper, Vol. X. of this Edit.

Sacrifice

Sacrifice was the *Antitype* of the Paschal feast. So that the properest season we can conceive for the institution of the *last supper*, was the instant of time between the celebration of the *Type*, and the offering of the *Antitype*. This time likewise corresponded with Christ's usual practice, who was wont to deliver his instructions by actions and expressions, bearing allusion to what passed before his eyes, or presented itself, in the natural course of things, to his observation *. These considerations shew, that the *action*, in the celebration of this Rite, was so strongly declarative of its nature, that had Jesus only broken the bread and given the cup *in remembrance of himself*, without adding, *this is my body* and *this is my blood*, no ingenuous Hearer could entertain a doubt, whether this was designed by him as a *Feast upon the Sacrifice*. But when to this we add the remaining part of the explanatory words, in the consecration of the Elements—THIS IS MY BODY—THIS IS MY BLOOD—what is here contended for becomes almost self-evident.

In these *feasts upon Sacrifice*, the very *body* that had been offered was eaten for the repast. Now, as the *last supper* was to be instituted, and the Rite first celebrated, *before* the great Sacrifice was actually offered, (for the reason just now given) it was on that account (not to mention other reasons) necessary that some *symbolic elements* should be substituted in the place of the *very body and blood*. These elements were BREAD AND WINE: on this occasion naturally, properly, and elegantly called, THE BODY AND BLOOD.

For if the specific nature of the *last supper* was *a feast upon Sacrifice*, we must needs conclude, that the divine Institutor of the feast would give all possible evidence of so important a Truth.

But if (as was in fact the case) this evidence must arise from, and out of, the occasion, and through the *words* of the Institution, then the figurative terms of BODY and BLOOD became necessary, these only being fully declarative of the nature of the Rite. And as this made

* See Sir Isaac Newton's *Observations on the Prophecies*, p. 148; where he takes notice how Jesus, from *the approach of harvest*—from *the lilies in bloom*—from *the leaves of the fig-trees shot out*—from *the sheep kept in folds near the temple for sacrifice*—was accustomed to take occasion of inculcating his spiritual Doctrines and Precepts.

the use of these *terms* to be necessary, so the *necessity* of them produced their ease and elegance. This is observed, because it has been usual amongst Protestants, even while they were opposing the portentous doctrine of TRANSUBSTANTIATION *, to acknowledge, either through ignorance of, or inattention to, the specific nature of the Rite, that the figure of *body and blood* was extremely violent and forced.

It likewise removes another difficulty, which the advocates for a *real presence* throw in the way of common sense. They pretend that, if the words of the institution were only FIGURATIVE, the Evangelist and St. Paul might, and probably would, have changed the *figure*, in their narratives, five times repeated on different occasions; for that no reason can be given of the unvaried use of the same words, but because they are to be understood LITERALLY; and then as they were declarative of one of the greatest Mysteries in Religion, there was a necessity to record the *very terms* employed, whenever the history of the Institution was related. To this, it is sufficient to reply, that, indeed, were the words used *figuratively*, and the *figure* only expressive of a death commemorated, and no more, as the Socinians suppose it to be, it would be but reasonable to think, the terms would have been varied by one or other of the sacred Writers; because it is natural to believe, that Writers of so different genius and acquirements in language would not all have the same opinion concerning the use of these *precise terms*, so as to esteem them preferable to any other; as, in fact, on this idea of the Rite, they would not be. But we can by no means allow their consequence, that, therefore, they are to be understood LITERALLY; since, if we admit the Institution to be of the nature of *a feast upon Sacrifice*, there will be the same necessity for the unvaried use of the terms, although they be *figurative*, as there would have been although they were *literal*. For these precise terms are as necessary to denote *a feast upon Sacrifice* (the Rite we contend for) as to denote the Sacrifice itself; the enormous idea of the church of Rome.

All this reasoning on the nature of the Institution, from the words of the Institutor, receives additional

* See note [U] at the end of this Book.

strength

strength even from what hath been supposed to invalidate it, namely, the conclusion of them—DO THIS IN REMEMBRANCE OF ME.—For although these words, when delivered alone, might enjoin no more than a *remembrance of a dead benefactor*, (which is the sense the Socinians put upon them) yet, when preceded by—THIS IS MY BODY—THIS IS MY BLOOD—they are certainly an injunction to keep in *remembrance* his death and passion for our REDEMPTION. And could there be a feast upon a Sacrifice in which that *Sacrifice* was not to be kept in mind?

It is true, that the Disciples of Christ being commanded to do this *in remembrance of him*, the Command shews that the celebration of this *Feast* was continually to be *repeated*, which was not the practice in the Pagan and Jewish *feasts after the sacrifice*. But, in this particular, the reason of the difference is apparent—The GREAT SACRIFICE itself (of which the Jewish were *Types*) put an end to that mode of Religious Worship amongst the Followers of Jesus.

Jewish and Pagan oblations had, or were supposed to have, a passing and temporary Virtue. *For the law having a shadow of good things to come, and not the very image of the things, can never with those sacrifices, which they offered year by year continually, make the Comers thereunto perfect:* FOR THEN WOULD THEY NOT HAVE CEASED TO BE OFFERED *.

But the sacrifice on the CROSS is the very *image* or the thing itself; and therefore has more than *a passing and temporary effect*, it continues operating till the consummation of all things; because *it makes the comers thereunto perfect:* we being sanctified through the *offering of the body and blood of Christ*, ONCE FOR ALL †: *for where remission of sins is, there is* NO MORE OFFERING FOR SIN ‡. It seemed expedient, therefore, that the operating virtue of this Sacrifice, *offered once for all*, should be continually set before our minds, in repeated celebrations of the *Feast upon it*.

What hath been here reasoned, on the *Institution of the last supper*, appeared so strong to a late eminent Person, famous for his Socinian notions on this Subject,

* Heb. x. 1, 2. † Ver. 10. ‡ Ver. 18.

that (as I have been told) he used to confess, that if the death of Christ could be proved to be a *real Sacrifice*, the *last Supper* was undoubtedly of the nature of the *Feast after the Sacrifice*. This was said with his usual address, to make his Reader overlook, and so to neglect, one of the capital arguments for a *real sacrifice*; for it insinuates, that arguments for its *reality* are to be sought for elsewhere, and not in the institution of this *Rite*: Whereas it is our design to shew, that this very Rite of the *last supper* constitutes one of the capital arguments for the reality of the Sacrifice itself. And, therefore, let us now go on with it.

We have seen what may be naturally, and, indeed, what must be necessarily, concluded from this part of the Evangelic History of the Institution of the LAST SUPPER, concerning Christ's design therein.

Let us see next what may be collected of St. Paul's sense concerning the same; who, although occasionally, yet hath at large spoken of the nature of the LAST SUPPER.

And here we shall find, that from this very *sort of Feast* (which the *words* of the Institution of it plainly alluded to) St. Paul expressly draws a comparison; and, at the same time, to explain the *efficacy* of the *Rite*, informs us of the end and purpose of those *Feasts upon Sacrifice*.

It is in that place of his first Epistle to the Corinthians, where he reproves the proselytes to Christianity for the idolatrous practice of sitting with the Gentiles, in their *feasts upon Sacrifice*, and eating of the meats that had been offered to Idols.

His words are these—"I speak as to *wise men*; judge "ye what I say. The *Cup of Blessing* which we bless, "is it not the COMMUNION OF THE BLOOD OF CHRIST? "The *bread which we break*, is it not the COMMUNION "OF THE BODY OF CHRIST? For we being many are "one bread, and one body: for we are all partakers of "that one bread. Behold Israel after the flesh: are "not they which eat of the Sacrifices, Partakers of the "Altar? What say I, then? *That an idol is any thing*, "*or that that which is offered to idols is any thing?* But "I say, that the things which the Gentiles sacrifice, they

"sacrifice

" sacrifice to Devils, and not to God: and I would not " that you should have FELLOWSHIP with Devils. Ye " cannot drink the Cup of the Lord, and the Cup of the " Devils: ye cannot be Partakers of the Lord's Table, " and of the Table of Devils *."

The Apostle here professeth to write to these Corinthians, under their own assumed Character of *wise men*. And, though, perhaps, he useth the term a little ironically—*as wise in their own conceit*,—to reprove the *divisions*, before objected to them, yet the logical inference, drawn from an appeal to men of such a character, is not at all weakened by the sarcasm under which it is conveyed. My meaning is, we may fairly conclude, that St. Paul's reasoning is such as, in his opinion, *wise men* would not disdain to weigh; and so regularly conducted, that *wise men* would acknowledge to be of force. In a word, pursued with that science and exactness, which leaves no room for the pretence of its having a loose, popular, or inaccurate meaning.

Whence we may collect, in the first place, that the *Cup of blessing* is not *merely a general commemoration of a dead Benefactor*, but principally *a commemoration of the* DEATH AND PASSION *of that Benefactor*. It is the *Communion of the blood of Christ*; an expression, as we have shewn, of the utmost elegance to denote *a feast upon Sacrifice*.

The inference which the Apostle draws from it, puts his meaning out of question—*For we being many* (says he) *are one bread, and one body: for we are all partakers of that one bread*: i. e. Our being *partakers of one bread*, in the communion, makes us, of MANY (which we are by nature), to become (by grace) ONE BODY in Christ. This inference is manifestly just, if the *Rite* be of the nature of *a Feast upon Sacrifice*; for then *the Communion of the body and blood of Christ* unites the *Receivers* into one body, by an equal distribution of one common benefit. But if it be *merely the Commemoration of a dead benefactor*, it leaves the *Receivers* as it found them; *not one body, incorporated by a common benefit*, but many separate individuals, professing one common Faith.

* 1 Cor. x. 15—21.

The

The Apostle having thus represented the LAST SUPPER to be of the nature of *a Feast upon Sacrifice*, for the truth of which he appeals to their own conceptions of it—*the cup of blessing, is it not the Communion?* &c. —*the bread which we break, is it not the Communion?* &c. He then endeavours to convince them of the *impiety* of their behaviour, from the nature of *those feasts*, as it was understood both by Jews and Gentiles; who alike held, that they WHO EAT OF THE SACRIFICES WERE PARTAKERS OF THE ALTAR: *i. e.* had the benefits of the Sacrifice. But what had these *eaters of the things sacrificed*, in common with the Partakers of the bread and wine in the LAST SUPPER, if this *Supper* was not a *feast* of the same kind with the *sacrificial Feasts?* If the three religious Feasts, Pagan, Jewish, and Christian, had not one common nature *, how could the Apostle have inferred that this intercommunity was absolutely inconsistent?—*Ye cannot drink the cup of the Lord, and the cup of Devils.* For though there might be *impiety* in the promiscuous use of Pagan and Christian Rites; yet the *inconsistency* arises from their having one common nature, which, springing from contrary originals, destroys one another's effects. The reasoning stands thus—*Those who eat of the Sacrifice, are partakers of the Altar*; that is, are partakers of the benefits of the Sacrifice. These benefits, whether real or imaginary, were confirmed by a pact or convention between the Sacrificer and his God. They who eat in *the feast on that Sacrifice* are partakers of the supposed benefits of the Sacrifice, and, consequently, are Parties to the federal Rites which confirmed those benefits: so that the same Man could not, consistently with himself, be Partaker of both *tables*, the Lord's table and that of *Devils*.

This argument, St. Paul urges to the *Wise Men*, whose practice he is here exposing. And we see, it turns altogether on the Postulatum agreed on, "that the *Last Supper* is of the nature of a feast upon Sacrifice."

Now, if, instead of this idea, we substitute that other of the *Socinians, That the Last Supper is a mere commemoration of a dead Benefactor*, all the force of this reasoning disappears and vanishes. For, although a rea-

* See note [I] at the end of this Book.

sonable

sonable man cannot execute two federal conventions, which destroy one another (the inconsistency here charged upon the Corinthians), yet he might celebrate, without *absurdity*, though not without *impiety*, a federal Rite in one religion, and a bare remembrance of a deceased Benefactor in another.

Further, the same Apostle, in correcting another abuse in the celebration of the *Lord's Supper*, takes occasion, once again, to declare the NATURE of this holy Rite.—His Corinthians, as appears by the next Chapter *, had been guilty of eating the *bread* and *wine* in a very indecent manner, confounding it with the convivial doings in their ordinary repasts; where charity and sobriety had been too often violated. This faulty behaviour, by such an indiscriminate celebration, the Apostle calls the being *guilty of the body and blood of Christ*: a charge immoderately exaggerated, were the Last Supper *a mere commemoration of a dead Benefactor*. The Corinthians did not make a fit distinction between their more ordinary food, and their eating and drinking *in memory of a deceased Friend*. This, without doubt, was a high indecorum; yet, to rank such delinquents with the *Murderers of the Lord of life*, is a severity in which we can see neither justice in the sentence, nor propriety in the terms of it. But let us only suppose (what we have indeed proved), that St. Paul regarded the Last Supper as *a feast upon Sacrifice*, that is, a Rite in which the benefits of Christ's death and passion were, in a certain manner, conveyed, in a proper celebration, thus impiously abused; and then the charge is fairly and justly made out. The profanation of such a Rite was, indeed, aiding and assisting in the crime of his Murderers, as far forth as it rendered his death ineffectual to the Participants; and therefore properly compared to the prodigious enormity of that impious act.

Such then, I presume, is the true nature of the LORD'S SUPPER. And were the adjusting an exact notion of it a matter of mere speculation, I should have been much shorter; and have left the discussion of it (under the simple idea of a religious custom of Christian Antiquity) to the Ecclesiastical Historian.

* 1 Cor. xi. 27.

But

But the Institution abounds with important consequences, in support of the Catholic Doctrine, which I here pretend to illustrate and confirm. For, if *the Last Supper be a feast upon Sacrifice*, the unavoidable consequence is, that *the death of Christ was a real Sacrifice*. It being the highest absurdity to believe, that a Rite was instituted on the supposition of *a real Sacrifice*, and to keep such Sacrifice in perpetual memory, and yet that *no real Sacrifice*, thus commemorated, ever had existence; but only the *shadow* of one, under a figure of Speech.

And now it is high time to call again upon the SOCINIANS to examine and review this whole matter.

The Writers of the New Testament unanimously and invariably call the Death of Christ on the Cross, A SACRIFICE. To this, the SOCINIANS reply, "We confess, indeed, that those Writers do thus uniformly qualify the Death of Christ. But their Phraseology abounds with FIGURATIVE TERMS; and the word SACRIFICE is plainly and eminently of this number. . . . . When the Death of Christ, so highly beneficial to mankind, was the subject of their discourse, they could not enforce the value of those Benefits so intelligibly and strongly amongst Men, who had been taught to conceive that the highest benefits were conveyed by the tremendous Rite of SACRIFICE. But that this was all which those Writers meant, when they called Christ's death a SACRIFICE, appears from hence, that SACRIFICE, whatever original it had, soon became, in practice, a superstitious and an irrational Rite; and gloried in an efficacy which right reason disavows, namely, a VICARIOUS ATONEMENT; brought, indeed, by Moses, together with other Pagan Rites, into the Law, on account of the hardness of heart amongst those with whom their Leader had to deal." This, and a great deal more to the same purpose, hath had its effect, to the discredit of the doctrine of REDEMPTION, on those Men, and on others, as ignorant of the true origin and nature of SACRIFICE as themselves.

To remove these objections to a Doctrine so essential to our faith, is the reason why I have been so large in proving,

1. First, From the origin and nature of SACRIFICE, that it is A REASONABLE SERVICE.

2. Secondly,

2. Secondly, That a VICARIOUS ATONEMENT, how much soever disclaimed by *natural Religion*, is, in the *Jewish Sacrifices* and in the *Sacrifice of Christ*, a proper *atonement*; and may be justified on the surest principles of reason.

3. Thirdly, That the Sacrifices of the *Law* were TYPICAL of the great Sacrifice of *Christ*.

4. Fourthly, That were it the purpose of the sacred Writers, in their history of Christ's death and passion, to represent it as a REAL SACRIFICE, it is not possible to conceive they could convey that meaning in more expressive terms than in those which they have employed.

5. And lastly, That Christ's death and passion was, by himself, ordained to be perpetually commemorated; by a Rite which declares *that* death could be no other than a *real Sacrifice*.

When the SOCINIANS, I say, have well considered all this, they may be asked, with propriety, and modesty, whether it can be believed by any reasonable man, that all this apparatus was provided for, and bestowed upon, a MERE FIGURE OF SPEECH? Or whether they deserve the title they give themselves, of being the only rational interpreters of Scripture, who can suppose such a perversion of Order, in the divine economy, as that it should dignify a MERE FIGURE OF SPEECH with preceding TYPES, and a following FESTIVE INSTITUTION; things, most improper for this Service; and only fitted to mislead us in our notions and conceptions concerning this capital doctrine of our holy *Religion*?

We have now (it is presumed) settled the true SPECIFIC NATURE of the death of Christ; and having before spoken largely of its END, we proceed to consider the effects of it.

They are comprised by the sacred Writers in the words, REDEMPTION and JUSTIFICATION.

Redemption respects the price paid by JESUS for our restoration to eternal life; and *Justification*, the acceptance of that price by GOD THE FATHER.

From these two terms School Divines coined a third, namely, SATISFACTION; which carries in it the ideas of a debt *paid* and *accepted*.

The

The disputes amongst Divines concerning the sense and propriety of the terms, *Redemption* and *Atonement*, *Justification*, *Satisfaction*, &c. have been endless, and the confusion attending them inexplicable; chiefly occasioned by all parties mistaking their ground, and arguing on the principles of NATURAL LAW, when they should have had recourse to the REVEALED, as now explained.

But here a difficulty occurs. LIFE AND IMMORTALITY is, throughout the New Testament, considered as a FREE GIFT; called so in express words by St. Paul; "But not as the *offence*, (says he) so also is the FREE GIFT*." Yet, we know, a large price was paid for it. And this, likewise, the same Apostle agrees to,—"We were BOUGHT (says he) with a price †." And St. Peter, speaking of certain heretics, says, *they denied the Lord that* BOUGHT *them*‡. And St. Paul again calls, what he had just before entitled A FREE GIFT,—A PURCHASED POSSESSION§.

To clear up this matter, and to reconcile the Apostle to himself, who certainly was neither defective in natural sense, nor in artificial logic, let us once again remind the reader, that *Life and Immortality*, bestowed on Adam in Paradise, was a FREE GIFT; as appears from the history of his Creation. As a *free gift*, it was taken back by the Donor, when Adam fell; to which resumption, our original natural rights are not subject; since natural Religion teacheth, that sincere repentance alone will reinstate us in the possession of those rights, which our crimes had suspended. So that when this free gift, forfeited by the *first* Adam, was recovered by the *second*, its nature continuing the same, it must still remain a *free gift*; a gift to which man, by and at his creation, had no claim; a gift which Natural Religion did not bestow.

But, if misled by measuring this *revealed mystery* of human redemption, by the scant idea of human transactions, where a *free gift* and a *purchased benefit* are commonly opposed to one another, yet even here we may be able to set ourselves right; since, with regard to man, the character of a *free gift* remains to *immortality restored*. For the price paid for forfeited man, was not

* Rom. v. 15. † 1 Cor. vi. 20.—vii. 23.
‡ 2. Pet. ii. 1, § Eph. i. 14.

paid

paid by him, but by a Redeemer of Divine extraction, who was pleased, by participating of man's nature, to stand in his stead. Hence the sacred Writers seeing, in this case, the perfect agreement between a FREE GIFT and a PURCHASED POSSESSION, sometimes call it by the one, and sometimes by the other name.

CHAP. III.

SO much for the MEANS of recovering what was lost by *Adam*'s transgression.

In the entrance on this subject, I cautioned the Reader to keep in mind the distinction between the MEANS of recovering a lost benefit, and the CONDITION annexed to the enjoyment of that benefit, when recovered, as two different things, to be separately considered, and in their order.

With regard to the MEANS, (already explained at large) it hath been shewn, that they were of an *arbitrary* nature, at God's good pleasure to appoint; unrestrained by any thing he had established in the general system of his moral government of man.

These MEANS, had not our holy Religion revealed them, could not, otherwise, have been known.

They were the DEATH AND SACRIFICE of his ever blessed Son, *Mediating* for us.

And now, *Man* being restored to his forfeited Inheritance, the secure possession of it still depended, as it did in the original grant, on the performance of a CONDITION.

We have already shewn, Why that *first Condition* was the observance of a POSITIVE COMMAND. Which reasoning, if it have any force, proves, that the *new condition*, annexed to the recovered blessing, must be the observance of a POSITIVE COMMAND likewise.

IMMORTALITY (as hath been shewn) was a FREE GIFT, as well when *recovered*, as when *originally given*; which might be bestowed, or recovered when forfeited, on what *Condition* the Divine Donor should be pleased to annex to it.

Nay, if we consider the nature of the whole economy, we shall find it could not well be given, or restored when lost,

lost, on any other condition than the observance of a *positive Command*, since the performance of MORAL DUTY was the *condition* already appropriated, by *Natural Religion*, to the procurement of GOD'S FAVOUR.

It is true, had IMMORTALITY not been a *free gift*, but what Man had a right to, on his Creation, while under the government of *Natural Religion*, the condition annexed to immortality might have been the performance of *Moral Duty*.

And indeed, those who so far mistake *immortality* as to esteem it a RIGHT, inherent in our nature, contend strongly for the *condition*'s being of a *moral kind*; and that the command—*not to eat of the Tree of good and evil*, enjoined to Man in Paradise, is *so* to be understood, though delivered under the cover of an Allegory.

But besides the reason given to evince this mistake, another arises from the sacred Writer's not *explaining* this pretended Allegory: for where an *Allegory* contains a precept respecting the whole of *moral duty*, it can never be too plainly nor fully delivered. There would be none of this necessity if both the first and second condition of *immortal Life* were of a *positive nature*, though delivered in allegoric terms which spoke for themselves; for then the chief use of an interpretation had been little more than the gratification of our curiosity.

Allow, therefore, the reasoning here offered to explain the nature of the *condition* annexed to the *free gift* (when first given, and when, after forfeiture, restored) to be solid and convincing, and it opens to us the abundant goodness of our Maker; who, that the possession of this recovered blessing might be no longer precarious, (as it was when first bestowed, on the condition, *to Do or to forbear Doing*) was graciously pleased to change one positive Command for another; and, instead of something *to be Done*, hath now required of us something TO BE BELIEVED. From henceforth the *free gift* of immortality is become more permanent and certain: a GRACE, which the very nature of the *new Dispensation* would lead us to hope for and expect; whereby IMMORTAL LIFE under the Gospel, like the FAVOUR OF THE DEITY under *natural Religion*, is now, when forfeited, to be regained by REPENTANCE.

So much reason, order, and beauty is seen in the various parts of God's moral Government of Man, when compared and explained by one another.

The new CONDITION, as we say, is FAITH IN THE REDEEMER; or our owning and receiving him as the promised Messiah, by whom alone we are to receive that salvation, procured for us by the Sacrifice of himself on the Cross.

And now, we begin to have some reasonable Notion of that great and fundamental principle of Christianity, that FAITH ALONE JUSTIFIETH, or, in other words, is the *sole condition* of recovering the possession of what we lost by ADAM.

This great Truth, though made the foundation of the Gospel of Jesus, yet (its reason lying hid, or not carefully sought for, and the little of it that was seen being horribly abused) *Believers*, as well as *Unbelievers*, have, too generally, concurred in condemning, as absurd in speculation, and fanatical and hurtful in practice. But the *Divine* who hath carefully studied the nature of God's moral or religious Dispensations, throughout all their parts, will be easily disposed to rest the whole of the Christian cause on the *reasonableness*, the *propriety*, and even the *necessity* of this capital Principle.

We have now shewn, 1st, That LIFE AND IMMORTALITY is, in its nature, a FREE GIFT; and that holy Scripture always represents it under this idea: 2dly, That the benefit, which *Natural Religion* informs us we have to expect from our great Master, is, simply, a reward for well-doing: A reward, indeed, which will be abundant; for though we be *unprofitable servants*, yet is he a most bountiful Master. But ABUNDANT and ETERNAL belong to different Systems.

Man, from his Creation, to his entrance into Paradise, was, as hath been shewn, subject to the *Law of Natural Religion* only. From thenceforth, to his expulsion from Paradise, *Revealed Religion* superinduced to the *Natural*, was to be his Guide: whereby, to GOD'S FAVOUR (the sanction of *Natural Religion*) was added IMMORTALITY (the sanction of the *Revealed*;) not on condition of his observance of *moral duties*; for that was the condition of God's *favour* under Natural Religion;

but on condition of his obedience to a *positive command.*

But who are they, who, on the *recovery* of the free gift of immortality, are qualified to claim it? Certainly none but those who are already entitled to *some reward* by the *Religion of Nature*; which Religion accompanies the *Revealed* throughout all its various Dispensations: and on which, they are all founded.

But to make this great principle of JUSTIFICATION BY FAITH ALONE still more clear, let us suppose that, at the publication of the Gospel, all to whom the glad tidings of immortality were offered, on the condition of *faith in Jesus*, had been moral or virtuous men; and, on that account, *entitled* (as natural Religion teacheth) to the *favour* of God, and an abundant reward; is it not self-evident, that FAITH ALONE, exclusive of the condition of good works, would, in that case, have been the very thing which *justified*, or entitled to life everlasting?

But are *good works*, therefore, of no use in the Christian system? So far from that impiety, *good works* are seen, by this explanation, to be of the greatest avail; as they render Men the only capable Subjects of this JUSTIFICATION which FAITH ALONE procures.

This is the true use and value of WORKS with regard to FAITH; and greater cannot be conceived. Hence it appears, that JUSTIFYING FAITH is so far from excluding GOOD WORKS, that it necessarily requires them. But how? Not as sharing in that JUSTIFICATION; but as procuring for us a title to God's *favour* in general, they become the *qualification* of that inestimable Reward, revealed by the Gospel, to be obtained by FAITH ALONE.

To illustrate this matter by a familiar instance: Suppose a British Monarch should bestow, in *free gift*, a certain portion of his own *Domaines** upon such of his subjects who should perform a certain service, to which they were not obliged by the stated Laws of that society under which they lived; it is evident, that the performance of this *last engagement* ONLY would be the thing which entitled them to the *free gift:* although that which

* To which *immortality* may be well compared.

gave

gave them a claim to protection, as Subjects, in the enjoyment of THEIR OWN PROPERTY*, acquired by observing the terms of the contract between Subjects and Sovereign, was the necessary qualification to their claim of the *free gift*; since it would be absurd to suppose that this gift was intended for Rebels and Traitors, or for any but good and faithful servants of the King and Community.

This, I presume, is the true, as it certainly is the only consistent explanation, which hath been hitherto given of JUSTIFICATION BY FAITH ALONE. Well, therefore, might St. Paul reprove the ignorance or licence of certain of his converts at Rome, in his question (which, under his authority, we have asked before) *Do we then make void the* LAW *through* FAITH? *God forbid! Yea, we* ESTABLISH THE LAW†.

" But how (it may be asked) is the *Law of Works* ESTABLISHED by the Christian Doctrine of *Faith?* For by the *Law of Works*, the Apostle could mean no other than the *Law of Nature*; he having again and again told us, the *Law of Moses*, as distinguished from the *Law of Nature*, was abolished by the Law of Christ. I answer, This *Law of Works* was indeed ESTABLISHED, and in the most substantial manner, by the doctrine of *Faith*, as these *Works* are the very foundation of *justifying Faith*; the qualification of all who are entitled to the *Fruits* of that *Faith*, viz. LIFE AND IMMORTALITY.

But further, to prevent all mistakes on this important subject, (if the wisest provisions of Heaven could have prevented the effects of human perversity, without violating freedom of will) God was pleased to send JOHN THE BAPTIST, as the Forerunner of his blessed Son, to proclaim and REPUBLISH this great principle of *Natural Religion*, PARDON ON REPENTANCE—*Repent ye, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand*‡. A necessary CALL to procure Subjects to this new Kingdom, just ready to be erected, where LIFE AND IMMORTALITY was to be obtained by *Faith*; but *such* a Faith as is ounded on those *Works* which *Natural Religion* requires o be performed; or, when neglected, the omission or transgression to be atoned for by REPENTANCE.

* To which the reward offered by *natural religion* may be well compared. † Rom. iii. 31. ‡ Matt. ii. 2.

This shews the extreme folly of what hath been asserted by certain of our unwary Friends, and echoed back to us, by the Enemies of our holy faith, that the GOSPEL ITSELF is only A REPUBLICATION OF THE RELIGION OF NATURE; whereas, it now appears, that the whole of THIS REPUBLICATION amounts to no more than a *republication* of one great principle of Natural Religion, viz. *Pardon on Repentance*; and this, as the foundation of (and in order to introduce and render effectual) our FAITH IN CHRIST, the great principle of the *Revealed*.

To proceed. It is with regard to *John*'s Character of a Preacher of *Moral Righteousness*, on the principles of Natural Religion, that *Jesus* says of him,—*Amongst them that are born of women hath not risen a greater than John the Baptist: notwithstanding, he that is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he* *: *this least in the kingdom of heaven is greater* (he says) *than John*, i.e. *greater in office*. JOHN only proclaimed and republished that great Principle of Natural Religion,—*the doing* WORKS *meet for Repentance* †. Whereas the Disciples of Jesus were the Promulgators of the efficacy of Revealed Religion—SAVING FAITH—*Greater* in their spiritual gifts and graces. They worked *Miracles*. John worked *no Miracle*. The reason is obvious: MIRACLES are the necessary CREDENTIALS of men sent by God to promulge a *new Revelation*. The preaching up of *Natural Religion* (which was John's office) needed none of these *Credentials*: its truth having been engraved in the breasts of every one, when God created *Man in his own Image*.

But this is not all. The better to secure this natural Foundation of SAVING FAITH, *Jesus* himself, in his entrance on his Ministry, thought fit to repeat and confirm the Mission of *John*; and in the very words of his Forerunner—REPENT, *for the kingdom of heaven is at hand* ‡. On this account, I suppose, it was that *Herod*, hearing that a new Prophet was just arisen, who began his Ministry like *John*, with preaching *repentance*, because *the kingdom of heaven was at hand*, mistook him for *John risen from the dead*; and being alarmed at the,

* Matt. xi. 11. † Acts xxvi. 20. ‡ Matt. iv. 17.

name

name of *Kingdom*, joined to the report of *Miracles*, now first performed by him, concluded, he was returned to life, with the accession of new powers: Herod, I say, in his fright, cries out,—*John the Baptist, whom I beheaded, is risen from the dead, and* THEREFORE *mighty works do shew forth themselves in him* *. A natural sentiment on this occasion. For cruelty, in its suspicions, commonly adds terror to superstition.

Yea, further, when *Jesus* first sent out his Disciples to give notice of his Gospel, they, too, were directed to enforce this previous and necessary Truth:—*And they went and preached that men should repent* †.

And they whom he left behind him at his ascension were likewise directed to perform the same office. They began their work with the doctrine of REPENTANCE, only changing the Baptism of *John* into that of *Jesus*. St. Peter, in his first discourse to all the *dwellers at Jerusalem*, who enquired of him into the *way of salvation*, speaks in this manner:—*Repent, and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ* ‡.

St. Paul tells Agrippa, that he began his Mission with exhorting both Jews and Gentiles, *that they should repent, and turn to God, and do* WORKS *meet for repentance* §. And as he *began* with *repentance*, so he *ends* with it, where, in his Epistle to the Hebrews, he expresseth himself in this manner, "Therefore leaving the PRIN-"CIPLES of the Doctrine of Christ, let us go on unto "PERFECTION; not laying again the FOUNDATION of "repentance from dead works, and of faith towards God." —These are the great principles of *Natural Religion*, which Christ made the FOUNDATION of his Gospel. Iniquity is called *dead works*—as by *Faith towards God* is meant simple belief in him; and alludes to the same Apostle's definition of Natural Religion—where he says, *he that cometh to God must* BELIEVE *that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.* The sense of which is this,—"Sink not back again to, nor "rest in that Principle of *Natural Religion*, after you "have made it (as your Master requires you should) the "*foundation* of his Gospel."

* Matt. xiv. 2.
† Acts ii. 38.
‡ Acts xxvi.
§ Acts xxvi.

But as there are not only *first principles* in Natural Religion, but likewise in the Revealed, the Apostle goes on with an account of these likewise—*The doctrines of Baptisms, and of laying on of hands, and of the resurrection of the dead, and of eternal judgement.* Now these *first principles* of the GOSPEL we are likewise forbid to rest in, no less than in those *first principles* of NATURAL RELIGION, which the Apostle began with—it follows (as we are directed) that we should GO ON UNTO PERFECTION. But if it be asked, *What was this doctrine of perfection?* I answer, it was that great MYSTERY, first revealed by the *Gospel*, which explains our loss by the disobedience of Adam, and the punishment attending it, together with the recovery of that loss by Christ Jesus, who was graciously pleased to become our MEDIATOR; and more than that, by virtue of his death and sufferings on the cross, our REDEEMER likewise, together with all the circumstances attending this wonderful transaction of human redemption.

This *Doctrine of Perfection*, the Apostle promises to explain to them, if God affords him leisure and a fitting opportunity—*if God* (says he) *permit* *. This, for some wise ends of his Providence, God did not *permit*. Nor have we any reason to complain, as he endowed his inspired servants, in general, both with leisure and abilities to enrich the world with the noblest treasures of divine knowledge, ordained to enlighten and accompany his Church till the consummation of all things.

Thus, on the whole, it appears, even by the *principle* here explained, of SALVATION BY FAITH ALONE, that NATURAL RELIGION IS THE GROUND AND FOUNDATION OF ALL THE REVEALED.

Here let us stop a moment, to deplore the condition of human blindness, always running into opposite extremes. While one sort of Believers (as we have observed) can see no more in the *Gospel* than a *Republication of the Religion of Nature*; and another are so far from owning, that *Natural Religion* is the foundation of the Revealed, that they are ready to deny that Natural Religion.

* Heb. vi. 1, 2, 3.

These,

These, indeed, are portentous opinions; yet less so than that of our RATIONALISTS, who deny what Scripture has, in so many words, so often repeated, SALVATION, or JUSTIFICATION BY FAITH ALONE.

But they had mistaken the Gospel-doctrine of *salvation* and *justification* for no more than God's *favour* indefinitely, as taught by *Natural Religion*; whereas the words signify ETERNAL LIFE, brought to light and defined by the *Gospel*. What occasioned their confounding two things so different, was an unsuspected error, full as gross, namely, that *Natural Religion*, in teaching a reward for well-doing, taught an *eternal Reward*. An error into which these men could scarce have fallen, had they distinguished the *Religion of Nature*, to which Adam became subject on his creation, from that Religion which was revealed unto him when he entered Paradise.

This hath been rectified at large towards the beginning of this Discourse; and to what important purposes, the Reader may now understand.

Indeed, had *Natural Religion* promised *life and immortality* for *well-doing*, then would God's two Dispensations have contradicted one another; as giving *immortality* to WORKS by *Natural Religion*, and *immortality* to FAITH by the *Revealed*.

But there are no contradictions in the Economy of God's moral Government. All such are the spawn of *human Systems*, the mis-shapen issue of *artificial Theology*. And if one thing, in sacred Scripture, seems to look thus asquint upon another, we may be assured it arises from the vitiated Organs of the Observer.

To instance, in the famous case (so apposite to our present purpose) of the Apostles, PAUL and JAMES; whom ignorant Interpreters have set at variance.

St. PAUL says*,—THEREFORE WE CONCLUDE, *that a man* IS JUSTIFIED BY FAITH WITHOUT THE DEEDS OF THE LAW.

But St. James seems to speak another language†—YOU SEE THEN, *how that by* WORKS a man is JUSTIFIED, AND NOT BY FAITH ONLY.

The assertion of each Apostle is (we see) a CONCLUSION from some preceding PREMISES. These are, first

* Rom. iii. 28. † His General Epistle, chap. ii. 24.

of all, to be considered, ere we can determine concerning the sense of either *conclusion*, where the same *capital word* is employed, by both Writers, in common.

St. Paul having explained (for that is his subject) the nature of the GOSPEL COVENANT, whereby we are restored to the Inheritance which we lost by *Adam*'s transgression, namely, *life and immortality*, ends his argument in this manner—*Therefore we conclude that a man is* JUSTIFIED BY FAITH [*i. e.* entitled to this recovered benefit by virtue of *Faith*] WITHOUT THE DEEDS OF THE LAW, [which are *Works*.] We have shewn how true this position is; WORKS being what *justifies* or entitles us to the *favour of God*, as taught by Natural Religion; the foundation, indeed, of the Gospel-Covenant; which promiseth life and immortality to FAITH ALONE.

But St. James, where he seems to talk so differently from Paul, was enforcing a very different thing, namely, the obligation of MORAL DUTY, as taught by *Natural Religion*, though not exclusive of the *Revealed*; for he exemplifies it by the precepts of the DECALOGUE; which, though a moral part of the LAW, is supported equally on the two Religions, Natural and Revealed. He, therefore, concludes his argument in this manner—*Thus we see, how that by* WORKS A MAN IS JUSTIFIED, *and not by Faith only.*

Hence it appears, that the two Apostles use the word JUSTIFICATION, in these places, in very different senses. St. Paul means by it, a title to *eternal life*, on the terms of *Revealed Religion*; and St. James, a title to *God's favour* indefinitely, on the terms of *Natural Religion.*

Neither can they be fairly charged with obscurity in using an undefined term in different significations, since, had their Readers but attended to the different subjects each apostle was then treating, and both in an equally clear and obvious manner, the objectors would have seen, there was not the least need of a formal definition to ascertain the meaning of either.

On the whole, it appears, that the two Apostles are perfectly consistent in their reasoning on this question. Whose words, when aptly put together, produce this complete and capital Truth,—" WORKS entitle us to a *reward* indefinitely;

indefinitely; FAITH to the reward of *eternal life:* But as he who deserves *no reward* at all, can never deserve the reward of *eternal life*, therefore the first step to the *greater* blessing must needs be a title to the *lesser*."

St. PAUL's purpose was to vindicate the use and honour of the *Gospel* from *judaising Christians*, by shewing, that the MORAL WORKS of the *Jewish Law* (the same with those of *Natural Law*) did not entitle the observers to *eternal life*; this being the specific reward which the *Gospel* bestows, and bestows it on FAITH alone.

St. JAMES's purpose was to vindicate the use and honour of *Natural Religion*, from the corrupt comments of those pretended Christians, who flattered themselves in their vices with the hopes of obtaining *eternal life* by FAITH, without being previously qualified for the FAVOUR of God, by the performance of those *good works* which Natural Religion enjoins: and so vitiating the integrity, and destroying the very nature of FAITH itself. A dreadful Venom, which appeared early, and, like a leprosy, soon overspread the face of the Church; at present known by the detested name of ANTINOMIANISM.

But to leave nothing unanswered on so important a question, I will suppose an Objector may persist in his reply.—Be it granted that the two Apostles are thus made consistent with one another; a stronger objection still remains to the doctrine *of Salvation by* FAITH ALONE, and that is the Declaration of Christ himself, who gives this *Salvation or Justification* to WORKS; where, in his account of his *second coming* to judge the world, he thus pronounces on the final doom of the Nations assembled round his Throne,—To the RIGHTEOUS, he says, *Come ye blessed of my Father,* INHERIT THE KINGDOM PREPARED FOR YOU FROM THE FOUNDATION OF THE WORLD. *For I was an hungred, and ye gave me meat; I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink; I was a stranger, and ye took me in; I was naked, and ye clothed me; I was sick, and ye visited me; I was in prison, and ye came unto me. Then shall the* RIGHTEOUS *answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungred and fed thee? or thirsty, and gave thee drink? When saw we thee a stranger, and took thee in? naked and clothed thee? or when saw we thee sick, or in prison, and*

came

came unto thee? And the KING *shall answer and say unto them, Verily, I say unto you, forasmuch as ye have done it unto* ONE *of the least of these my Brethren, ye have done it unto me. Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the Devil and his angels. For I was an hungred, and ye gave me no meat; I was thirsty, and ye gave me no drink; I was a stranger, and ye took me not in; naked, and ye clothed me not; sick and in prison and ye visited me not. Then shall they also answer him, saying,* LORD, *when saw we thee an hungred, or athirst, or a stranger or naked, or sick or in prison, and did not minister unto thee? Then shall he answer them, saying, Verily I say unto you inasmuch as ye did it not to one of the least of these, ye did it not unto me**.

To explain this, which seems to bear so hard against us, we must first of all observe the great care and caution in the divine Founder of our Faith, and of his Apostles, to whom he committed the trust of proclaiming it to the World; the care, I say, that this capital Doctrine of his Religion, JUSTIFICATION BY FAITH ALONE, should not be mistaken or abused, in making FAITH supersede those WORKS which Natural Religion requires as necessary to procure the *favour of God.* WORKS, which we have shewn to be the only true foundation of that FAITH WHICH ALONE JUSTIFIES. And the world hath had full experience of the horrid ABUSES occasioned by Men's placing FAITH on any other foundation.

So that were there *no more* in this *Scenical Representation* of the *last Judgment* than the purpose to make WORKS bear so considerable a part in it, the Representation had been still highly expedient. But there was *a great deal more.*—

—Hold, says an Objector; Let us first ask how this Scene can at all stand with your System, which teacheth, "that WORKS only entitle to the *reward indefinitely*; and that it is FAITH which entitles to the reward of eternal life: for these RIGHTEOUS, in the text, are rewarded with that which is only due to the FAITHFUL, namely, *eternal life.*"

* Matt. xxv. 34—45.

—I was

—I was about to explain another important use of this *Representation*, which you will now find is a full answer to your Objection.

—Jesus, in the very *mode* of obviating the above-mentioned *abuses* (for they were those abuses which it was his purpose here to obviate), hath, with the most divine energy and address, instructed us in another important Truth, namely, THAT THE VIRTUE AND MERITS OF HIS DEATH HAD A RETROSPECT QUITE BACKWARD EVEN TO THE TIME OF THE FALL. The *Righteous*, or the performers of *good Works*, are here told, that they shall INHERIT *the Kingdom of Christ*, PREPARED FOR THEM *from the foundation of the World*. Who were these, here called, *Righteous?* Certainly such who had never heard of Christ, or been made acquainted with the terms of the Gospel; such who had obeyed the dictates of Natural Religion; and not having the LAW *of revealed Religion*, were (as the Apostle says) *a Law unto themelves**. This will appear evident to those who consider the nature and purpose of this *Representation* of the *last Judgment*; when all Nations, or the whole Race of Mankind, as well those who lived *before*, as those who came *after* the Advent of the Son of God, are to appear at his Judgment-Seat.

The tremendous Session, here represented, proceeds in order. They who lived *before* the coming of Christ, are the first who are set to the Bar, whether for reward, or for condemnation. They who lived *after* were to come next. But, with the first, the Scene closes.

For Jesus had already explained *the terms of Salvation* to all the followers of the Gospel. Concerning the condition of these there could be no doubt. It might become a question amongst them, how those who had never heard of Christ were to be treated; and whether they were to be made partakers of the benefits of his Death and Passion; and likewise, upon what terms. To resolve those points, was the design of this moral Picture.

These *Righteous* are justified or saved. But how? surely not by FAITH. For, the Apostle tells us, that FAITH *cometh by hearing; and hearing by the word of God*†. That is, "The doctrine of *justifying Faith*

* Rom. ii. 14. † Rom. x. 17.

cannot

cannot be learnt from *Natural Religion*; but is to be taught by the Messengers of the *Revealed*, speaking by the Spirit of God." The *justification of these Righteous*, therefore, must needs be by WORKS; the natural foundation on which all revealed FAITH is built.

But to shew still more evidently, and sensibly, that the *Righteous*, in the Text, were those who had never heard of Christ, till they came to *Judgment*, we must observe, that as soon as they had been told what kind of WORKS they were which procured their Salvation, namely, administering to this their *Lord when he was a stranger, naked, sick, and in prison*, they are made to reply—*Lord, when saw we thee a stranger, naked, sick, and in prison?* A Question, which they, who, in this life, had heard of Christ, could never ask; since their *Lord* had often told his Followers, that the men who did any of these *good Works* to the least of their distressed Brethren, did them unto him: that is, gained the same benefit by them, as if done to himself.

In a word, this important REPRESENTATION instructs us in these two points of Doctrine: First, That the KINGDOM, whose blessings were produced by the death and passion of Christ, was secured to us *even from the foundation of the world:* and Secondly, That it was, *actual Righteousness*, as well as *imputative*, which made those who had never heard explicitly of CHRIST, to become partakers of his merits.

CHAP. IV.

HAVING now, at length, gone through this GENERAL VIEW OF THE NATURE AND GENIUS OF THE CHRISTIAN RELIGION; first, by an explanation of the MEANS by which we are enabled to recover the benefits lost by Adam's transgression; and, secondly, by an explanation of the CONDITION annexed to the enjoyment of those benefits, when recovered: We proceed to what remains of our *general view*. This Religion, as it was the LAST REVELATION of God's Will to Man, so it was the completion of all that preceded; and, therefore, when truly explained, must needs add the UTMOST FORCE AND LIGHT to every thing that, in the foregoing Volumes of

the

the DIVINE LEGATION, hath been advanced, concerning the NATURE OF THE JEWISH DISPENSATION.

We have already observed how graciously the Divine Goodness displayed itself, in the RESTORATION of our *lost Inheritance*, by changing the *condition* annexed to eternal life, from something to be DONE, to something to be BELIEVED. And this was FAITH IN OUR REDEEMER. For by such a change, this important blessing became less subject to a new loss or danger.

But this was not all. The same bountiful Lord of life did, for its further security, impart to every true Believer, the strength and light of his HOLY SPIRIT to support FAITH *in working out our Salvation**.

Natural Reason, indeed, contemplating the attributes of the Deity, discovered to us, that when human abilities alone are too weak to support us in the performance and discharge of moral duty, God will lend his helping-hand to aid our sincere endeavours.

But to manifest to us with what more abundant measure this aid is dispensed, under the GOSPEL; our blessed *Redeemer* hath minutely explained all that relates to the PERSON and to the operations of the Divine Dispenser, called the HOLY SPIRIT; whom the FATHER and the SON have, for the further security of this recovered blessing, been pleased to associate with themselves in the administration of this economy. Which divine Person bears his share, with the other two, in the actual REDEMPTION OF MANKIND.

Thus far as to his NATURE. By which it appears, that this species of divine assistance, which our holy Religion calls GRACE, is to be understood as one of the *peculiar* blessings bestowed upon the FAITHFUL; and to be reckoned in that number. The words of St. John makes this truth still more apparent. *This* (saith he) *Jesus spake of the* SPIRIT, *which they that believe on him should receive. For* THE HOLY GHOST WAS NOT YET GIVEN, BECAUSE THAT JESUS WAS NOT YET GLORIFIED†.

The OFFICE and OPERATION of this *holy Spirit*, is to support our *Faith* and to perfect our *Obedience*, by

* See *the Doctrine of Grace*, vol. viii. of this Edit.

† John, viii. 39.

enlightening

enlightening the *understanding* and by purifying the *will*.

This, the blessed Jesus declares, where he professedly treats of the office of the *holy Spirit*.—*I will pray the Father* (says he) *and he shall give you another* COMFORTER, *that he may abide with you for ever; even the* SPIRIT OF TRUTH. *He dwelleth in you; and shall be in you—which is the* HOLY GHOST *whom the Father shall send in my name: he shall* TEACH YOU ALL THINGS*.

These are the two parts of his office: As the TEACHER, to impress upon the *understanding* all those practical and speculative truths, which constitute the sum and substance of our holy Religion; and as the COMFORTER, by purifying and supporting the *will*, to enable us to persevere in the profession of those truths that constitute the body of *moral righteousness*; the foundation (as we have shewn) of that JUSTIFYING FAITH, to which the Gospel hath annexed salvation or eternal life.

And the economy of the Gospel seemed to require, that when this Dispenser of divine assistance, the HOLY SPIRIT, was to be clearly revealed, and personally distinguished, as soon as Jesus was GLORIFIED†, his first descent, amongst the *Faithful*, should be attended with *signs* and *wonders*, to bear witness to the SANCTIFIER in the same way that they had borne witness to the REDEEMER. These signs were, in both cases, of the same nature, and performed for the same ends: First, for CREDENTIALS of their mission; and, secondly, INDICATIONS of their office.—"When the day of Penticost was "fully come, they [the Apostles] were all, with one "accord, in one place; and suddenly there came a "sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and "it filled all the house where they were sitting. And "there appeared unto them cloven tongues, like as of "fire, and it sat upon each of them: and they were all "filled with the HOLY GHOST; and began to speak "with other tongues, as the SPIRIT gave them utter-"ance‡."

This miracle manifested itself in the *gift of tongues*, to the astonished multitude, barbarous and civil, then

* John xiv. 26. † John vii. 39. ‡ Acts ii. 1. et seq.

casually

casually assembled from every quarter of the habitable Globe, who heard the APOSTLES, (all natives or inhabitants of Galilee,) speaking to each of these Strangers, in his own mother-tongue. And this being for the service and conviction of others, was, in its nature, TEMPORARY *. Other effusions of the holy Spirit were PERMANENT; and these, instead of being conveyed *in a sound from heaven as of* A RUSHING MIGHTY WIND, were only conveyed and felt in the STILL, SMALL VOICE. For these were principally for the use and benefit of the favoured Receiver; who, although he himself was fully assured by them of the divine presence, yet could he give no sufficient evidence of that Presence to others.

Thus it appears, that this species of divine assistance, which our holy Religion calls GRACE, is to be considered as one of the *peculiar* blessings bestowed upon the *Faithful.* For, as hath been observed, the FATHER and the SON have been graciously pleased to associate, in the administration of this new economy, a *third divine Person*, called in Scripture the HOLY GHOST.

CHAP. V.

THIS MIRACULOUS appearance of the HOLY SPIRIT, on his first *Descent*, naturally and happily leads us forward in this our *general view*; by bringing us to the consideration of the extraordinary manner in which it hath pleased Providence to promulge and propagate the Christian Faith.

Now, as it is apparent to common sense, that an immediate Revelation from Heaven can be firmly established no otherwise than by the intervention of MIRACLES; and, as we have found, by the sad experience of human corruption, that THIS SUPREME EVIDENCE of our holy Religion hath been fatally discredited by the contagion of *lying wonders*, deforming almost every age of the Church, it will be of the utmost importance to discover and fix the bounds of this *extraordinary interposition* †.

* See Note [K] at the end of this Book.

† See *Discourse on the Resurrection*, vol. x. of this Edit.

But

But a MIRACLE, even when best supported by human testimony, needeth to be still further qualified, ere it can deserve credit of a rational Believer: namely, that it be so connected with the system to which it claims relation, as that it be seen to make a part of it, or to be necessary to its completion.

It is otherwise, in Facts, acknowledged to be within the verge of nature and human agency. Here all that is wanted to recommend them to our belief, is the testimony of knowing and honest Witnesses.

While in pretended Facts beyond the verge of nature and human agency, such as those we call MIRACULOUS, much more is required when offered to our belief. The controul and arrest of the established Laws of Nature, by the God and Author of Nature, either mediately or immediately, is a thing which COMMON EXPERIENCE hath rendered so extremely improbable, that it will at least balance the very best human testimony, standing unsupported and alone. And, why? Because ordinary Facts carry their CAUSES openly and manifestly along with them: Or if not so, yet none are required, as we are convinced their *causes* must be INTRINSECALLY there. But in Facts pretended to be *miraculous*, the immediate efficient cause is *extrinsecal*; and therefore leaves room for doubt and uncertainty: or rather, when, in this case, men perceive *no cause*, they are apt to conclude there is none; or, in other words, that the report is false and groundless. So that when the *whole evidence* of the Fact, deemed *miraculous*, is solely comprised in human testimony, and is, in its nature, contrary to UNIFORM EXPERIENCE, the Philosopher will, at least, suspend his belief.

But though in all MIRACLES, that is, in Facts deemed miraculous, the EFFICIENT CAUSE continues unknown; yet, in those which our holy Religion seems to recommend to our belief, the FINAL CAUSE always stands apparent. And if *that cause* be so important as to make the *Miracle* necessary to the ends of the DISPENSATION, this is all that can be reasonably required to entitle it to our belief; when proposed to us with the same fulness of human testimony, which is sufficient to establish a common fact: since, in this case, we have the MORAL ATTRIBUTES OF

THE DEITY to secure us from an error, so fatal to our welfare *.

And the confining our belief of *Miracles* within these bounds, wipes away (as I conceive) all the miserable sophistry of our modern pretenders to Philosophy, both at home and abroad, against MIRACLES, on pretence of their being contrary to GENERAL EXPERIENCE, in the ordinary course of things. At least, the TRUE PHILOSOPHER so thought, when he made that strict enquiry into Truth, towards the conclusion of his immortal Work—"Though COMMON EXPERIENCE (says he) AND "THE ORDINARY COURSE OF THINGS have justly a "mighty influence on the minds of men to make them "give or refuse credit to any thing proposed to their be-"lief; yet there is ONE CASE wherein the STRANGENESS "of the facts LESSENS NOT THE ASSENT to a fair testi-"mony given of it. For where SUPERNATURAL events "are SUITABLE TO THE ENDS AIMED AT BY HIM who "hath power to change the course of nature, *then*, under "such circumstances, they may be FITTER to procure "belief, by how much the more they are BEYOND OR "CONTRARY TO ORDINARY OBSERVATION. This is "the proper case of MIRACLES, which, well-attested, do "not only find credit themselves, *but give it also to other* "*truths which need such confirmation* †."

Now the MIRACLES, which Christianity objects to our belief, and which, therefore, demand credit of every reasonable man, are, and I apprehend must be, qualified in one or other of these three ways:

I. They must either, in the first place, be such as Christ and his inspired Servants and Followers are re-

* Here, by the way, let me observe, that what is now said gives that CRITERION, which Dr. Middleton and his Opponents, in a late controversy concerning MIRACLES, demanded of one another; and which yet, both Parties, for some reasons or other, declined to give; namely, some certain mark to enable men to distinguish (for all the purposes of Religion) between true and certain *Miracles*, and those which were false or doubtful.

† Locke's Essay concerning Human Understanding, vol. ii. Chap. *Of* the Degrees of Assent, § 13. p. 286.——This great man, we find, understood it to be apparent to common sense, that the belief of an immediate Revelation from Heaven could be firmly established no otherwise than by the aid of *Miracles*.—But see this truth proved more at large as we go along.

corded to have performed for the CREDENTIALS of their mission.

II. Or, secondly, such as make a necessary part in, or towards the completion of, the Gospel System.

III. Or, thirdly and lastly, such as have been performed directly to manifest and VERIFY THE DIVINE PREDICTIONS, when impious men have set themselves on attempting to defeat them.

I.

When a *Miracle* is wrought (as in the first case) for the CREDENTIAL of a Messenger coming with the revealed Will of God, to Man, we may safely confide in it. Because *such* a Miracle is so far from being beneath the dignity of the occasion, that it is even necessary to answer the important purpose of it. Under this Idea, it hath, I believe, been generally conceived in every age of our holy Religion, till the *present*. Indeed, it seems to have been the constant expectation of Believers, that these supernatural attestations should accompany every NEW MESSAGE from Heaven; insomuch that all the *pretended Revelations* in the Pagan World, as well as the *real* in the Jewish and the Christian, were constructed on this principle of credit.

But now, in these times, some there are even amongst the Ministers of the Gospel, who tell us, they think, or at least are hardy enough to teach, that the REASONABLENESS of the Doctrine is the best, and indeed the only true evidence of its divine Original.

If in this they should not be mistaken, I may, however, boast, that I, myself, have, in this Work, greatly strengthened this boasted plenitude of evidence.

But, in reverence to Truth, I hold myself obliged to own, that, in my opinion, the REASONABLENESS of a Doctrine pretended to come immediately from God, is, of itself alone, no PROOF, but a PRESUMPTION only of such its divine Original: because, though the *excellence* of a Doctrine (even allowing it to surpass all other moral teaching whatsoever) may shew it to be worthy of God, yet, from that sole *excellence*, we cannot certainly conclude that it came immediately from him; since we know not to what heights of moral knowledge the human understanding, unassisted by inspiration, may arrive. Not even

even our full experience, that all the Wisdom of Greece and Rome comes extremely short of the Wisdom of the GOSPEL, can support us in concluding, with certainty, that this Gospel was sent immediately from God. We can but very doubtfully guess, what excellence may be produced by a well-formed and well-cultivated Mind, further blessed with a vigorous temperament, and a happy organization of the Body. The amazement into which Sir Isaac Newton's Discoveries in Nature, threw the learned World, as soon as men became able to comprehend their Truth and Utility, sufficiently shews, what little conception it had, that the human faculties could ever rise so high or spread so wide.

On the whole, therefore, we conclude, that, strictly speaking, there is no ground of conviction solid and strong enough to bear the weight of so great an interest, but that which rises on MIRACLES, worked by the first Messengers of a new Religion, in support and confirmation of their MISSION.

That is, MIRACLES, and MIRACLES ONLY, demonstrate that the Doctrine, which is seen to be *worthy* of God, did, indeed, COME IMMEDIATELY from him.

To be plain, there is a glaring absurdity in the novel fancy here exposed; of which we can find no instance in the affairs of civil life—And civil and religious Policies are conducted on the same principles of Reason, while administered in their integrity. For what *public Person* ever imagined, or expected to have it believed, that the true and proper CREDENTIAL of a Minister of State was the fairness of his Character, or the equity of his demands? Nothing but the BROAD-SEAL of his Master, he knows, will satisfy those to whom he is sent, that he has a right to the Personage which he assumes. Doth not common sense tell us, that a Messenger from God must come recommended to Mankind in the same manner? Neither his personal accomplishments, nor the excellence of his Doctrine, nor, in a word, any thing short of the BROAD-SEAL of Heaven, exemplified in MIRACLES, will be sufficient to establish his assumed Character.

But the Doctors of this *new School* seem to have fallen into the absurdity here exposed, by another as ridiculous; namely, that THE GOSPEL ITSELF IS NO MORE, NOR

OTHER, THAN A REPUBLICATION OF THE RELIGION OF NATURE: (an extravagance, amongst the first of those, which, I presume, this Work of the Divine Legation hath totally discredted.)

Now (say these men) if the light of Reason hath instructed us in, what NATURAL RELIGION teacheth, it seems most consonant to common sense, that the REPUBLICATION of this Religion should be established in the same manner that it was first PUBLISHED to the world. NOT so, (I reply) even on their false principle of a mere REPUBLICATION. For since it was found, by experience, that the first publication of God's will, by natural light alone, hath proved insufficient to perpetuate the knowledge of it; we shall think it most adequate to Reason, that the REPUBLICATION should be better guarded; to secure it from the like mischance.

But the truth is, this idea of Christianity's being *merely such a* REPUBLICATION arose from the grossest ignorance of the GOSPEL; which reveals more, infinitely more important Truths than NATURAL LIGHT did or could discover. It reveals the whole scheme of *human Redemption*; which, till this *Revelation* took place, was a MYSTERY, kept hid amongst the Arcana of the Godhead.

However, the same Men have another objection to the belief of these *miraculous Credentials*. And the objection arises, it seems, from our SOPHISTICAL reasoning in support of them; for thus (they say) we argue——

"So little being known of the powers of created spirits, superior to ourselves, (some of which we are taught to believe are beneficent to man, and some averse) all that we can conclude of MIRACLES, considered only in themselves, is, that they are the work of agents, able, in some instances, to control Nature, and divert her from her established course.—But whether this control be performed immediately by the God of Nature, or by Agents acting under his direction, (which amounts to the same thing) or, on the contrary, by malignant agents, at enmity with Man, and, for a time, permitted to indulge their perverse and hurtful purposes, cannot be known but by the *nature of that Doctrine*, in support of which, the pretended MIRACLES are performed. The conclusion

from this is, that THE MIRACLES ARE TO BE VERIFIED BY THE DOCTRINE.

But then, (say they again) since we know so little of the extent of the human understanding, we cannot determine of the *true Original* of the Doctrine, proposed to our belief, till it be supported by MIRACLES; now the conclusion from this is, that the DOCTRINE IS TO BE VERIFIED BY MIRACLES.

Such is the vicious Circle (say our adversaries) round which we run, when we first PROVE THE MIRACLES BY THE DOCTRINE, AND THEN PROVE THE DOCTRINE BY THE MIRACLES.

This is, without doubt, *a Paralogism.* But we deny that any such faulty reasoning is here employed. The term DOCTRINE, in the first proposition, is used to signify *a Doctrine agreeable to the truth of things, and demonstrated to be so by natural light.* In the second proposition, the term, DOCTRINE, is used to signify *a Doctrine immediately, and in an extraordinary manner,* revealed by God. So that these different significations, in the declared use of the word DOCTRINE, in the two propositions, sets the whole reasoning free from that *vicious Circle* within which our Philosophic Conjurers would confine it. In this, there is no fruitless return of an unprogressive argument; but a regular procession of two distinct and different Truths, till the whole reasoning becomes complete. In truth, they afford mutual assistance to one another; yet not by taking back, after the turn has been served, what they had given; but by continuing to hold what each had imparted to the support of the other.

On the whole, we conclude, that if any Messengers ever wanted the CREDENTIALS OF MIRACLES, they were the first MESSENGERS OF GOD in the revealed Mystery of the GOSPEL.

Indeed, divine Providence hath so strictly appropriated MIRACLES *for these* CREDENTIALS, that JOHN THE BAPTIST, the Precursor of those Messengers, destined only to announce the approaching GOSPEL, worked NO MIRACLES: yet, had *Miracles* been of no other use than what this new-fangled Doctrine assigns to them, namely, to make the hearers attentive to the excellence of the

morals of the new Religion, none had more need of them than JOHN and his Penitents.—St. CHRYSOSTOM seems to have understood the GOSPEL better than these modern Divines, when he supposed that even JESUS himself worked no *Miracle* till after his baptism, *i. e.* till the time of his addressing himself to his Mission, when CREDENTIALS to his Character were naturally required; which *Credentials* had he not given, the unbelieving Jews, as he himself acknowledges, had been free from blame.—IF I HAD NOT DONE AMONGST THEM (says he) THE WORKS WHICH NONE OTHER MAN DID, THEY HAD NOT HAD SIN *.

II.

We come next to that second Species of *Miracles*, mentioned above, whose subject makes so essential a part in the Economy of the GOSPEL, that, without it, the whole would be vain and fruitless. The first and principal of the species is the MIRACLE of Christ's RESURRECTION from the Dead—*If Christ be not* RAISED, (saith St. Paul) *your faith is vain; you are yet in your sins* †. And St. Peter uses the same argument to shew the NECESSITY of his Master's *resurrection—God* says he) *raised him up, having loosed the pains of death*; (BECAUSE IT WAS NOT POSSIBLE THAT HE SHOULD BE HOLDEN OF IT ‡.

Now from whence does the *impossibility* arise, if not from the force of St. Paul's argument concerning the nature of Christ's *Resurrection?*

So important a circumstance, therefore, required that the highest evidence should be given of its truth.

CHRISTIANITY reveals the restoration of lapsed and forfeited Man to life and immortality from the power and dominion of the Grave.

But the course of human nature continuing the same *after* this restoration which it held *before*, and the GRAVE still boasting its power, though foolishly, indeed, and in vain, *since Death had lost its Sting* §; there seemed to be need of some extraordinary evidence of the *reality of this change* in the order of things, which being procured at the price of Christ's death on the Cross, and then visibly paid, the nature of the compact required that the

* John xv. 24. † 1 Cor. xv. 17. ‡ Acts ii. 24. § 1 Cor. xv. 55.

benefit

benefit obtained should be as visibly put into our possession; and both one and the other openly exemplified in the same Person, the *Author of our Salvation*. For, if he himself was not seen to enjoy the fruits of that Redemption, which was of his own procuring, what hopes could be entertained for the rest of mankind? Would it not have been too plausibly concluded, that this expedient of *Redemption* had proved ineffectual by CHRIST's not *rising?* So necessarily connected (in the Apostle's opinion) was the MIRACLE of our Saviour's visible *resurrection* with the very essence of the Christian Faith. And this *Resurrection being the first fruits of them that slept*, was the very thing which both assured and sanctified all the benefits that were to follow. For the *Jewish first fruits* (to which the expression alludes) were of the nature, and a security to the plenty, of the approaching Harvest.

Thus, we see, the MIRACLE of the *Resurrection* made a necessary part of the integrity of the Gospel.

But it had other uses and expediencies, besides; which, (in concluding this head,) I shall, in as few words as possible, endeavour to point out. The heathen World had, in general, some notion of another life. But a *resurrection* of this *material* body, after death, to accompany the soul in its future existence, never once entered into their imaginations; though some modern Writers have been misled to think otherwise, partly by what they had learnt of the *fables of the vulgar*, full of shadows of a bodily shape, Inhabitants of the Tombs, or Attendants on the *Soul*, in the sequestered abode of Spirits; and partly of the more solemn dreams of the Philosophers, particularly the famous STOICAL RENOVATION, which, however, is so far from bearing any resemblance, or yielding any credit to the CHRISTIAN resurrection, though mistaken for it, that it is absolutely inconsistent with it.

The Sages of Antiquity had discovered many qualities in the human *Soul*, which disposed them to think that it might survive the *Body*. But every property they knew of *Matter* led them to conclude, that, at the separation and dissolution of the union between these two constituent parts of Man, the *Body* would be resolved into the

Elements from whence it arose. And that sect of Philosophy which most favoured, and best cultivated the Doctrine of the Soul's immortality, considered the Body only as its *prison*, into which it was thrust, by way of penance, for its pre-existent crimes; and from which, when it had undergone its destined purgation, it was to be totally set free. Nay, so little did the RESURRECTION OF THE BODY enter into their more studied conceptions, that when St. Paul, at Athens, (the capital Seat of Science,) preached JESUS AND THE RESURRECTION *, his Auditors mistook the second term to be like the first, a revelation of some new Deity, a certain Goddess, called ANASTASIS †.

With all these prejudices, so unfavourable to the RESURRECTION OF THE BODY, nothing less than the assurance of the best attested MIRACLE, in confirmation of it, could have reconciled the Gentile World to the belief of so incredible a Doctrine.

This we say with the greater confidence, since St. Paul himself, on this occasion, appears to argue on the same idea.

* Acts xvii. 31.

† In this sense St. CHRYSOSTOM understood the thoughts of the Athenians to be concerning St. Paul's mention of the *Anastasis*. Dr. BENTLEY thinks otherwise. But which of these two Doctors was likely to be best acquainted with the genius and state of Paganism, when St. Paul preached at Athens, must be left to the judgment of the Reader. This, at least, is certain, that the reason the modern Doctor gives, why the *Athenians could not mistake* ANASTASIS *for a Goddess, because they too well understood the notion of a resurrection*, is a very weak one, since they had no notion of a *resurrection* at all; unless they mistook (which is very unlikely) the STOICAL RENOVATION for that which the Apostle preached. Dr. Bentley, indeed, seems to have fallen into that error, or he could scarce have said—*the Athenians well understood the notion of a Resurrection.* However, let the Athenians understand this *Stoical renovation* as they would, they were certainly liable to a folly as gross, and at that time much more general, which was, the turning *a moral entity into an object of worship:* most of which abstract notions, superstition had thus metamorphosed. Amongst the JEWS, indeed, the RESURRECTION was become a national Doctrine some time before the advent of the MESSIAH; not collected (we may be sure) from natural reason, nor taught them by their *Scriptures*, yet collected from the contemplation of their Prophets misinterpreted; where the *restoration of the Mosaic Republic* was predicted, in terms which were mistaken by the latter Jews, to signify the revival or resurrection of the Bodies of their deceased Ancestors; of which many instances might be given, besides Ezekiel's *Vision of the dry bones.*

idea. For when he had rectified this error of the Athenians, concerning *Jesus and the resurrection*, and had informed them that, by this *resurrection*, he meant the revival of the *dead bodies* of men, and restoration of them to life, he adds—*whereof God hath given* ASSURANCE *unto all men, in that he raised Jesus from the dead.—For after his resurrection, he was seen* (says the same Apostle, on another occasion) *of five hundred brethren at once; of whom the greater part remain unto this present.* 1 Cor. xv. 6.

2. Under this second division of *Miracles*, whose subject makes an essential part in the Economy of the Christian dispensation, let me recommend to your consideration and belief the power of Jesus and his Disciples to CAST OUT DEVILS OR EVIL SPIRITS from the bodies of Men suffering by those inhospitable Guests*.

And under this division I the rather chuse to place this species of Miracles, since, by occasion of a very general and infamous pretence of such a power, especially in these later times, the fact itself has been rendered doubtful; and even excluded from the number of those mental and bodily disorders, recorded by the Evangelists, to have been relieved in the most extraordinary manner by Jesus and his Disciples—*And they brought unto him all sick people* (says St. Matthew) *that were taken with divers diseases and torments, and those which were* POSSESSED WITH DEVILS, AND LUNATICS; *and he healed them*†.—Insomuch that at length we have been told, that what is here called the being *possessed with Devils*, was, indeed, no other than an atrabilaire Lunacy, or one of those *occult distempers* for which Physicians could not find a remedy, or, what was still harder, were at a loss for a *name*; and therefore, in complaisance to the imbecility of their Patients, they agreed to suppose it *supernatural*, or (saving your presence) the *work of the Devil*.

But this strange Malady being delivered to us as a REAL POSSESSION by the Evangelist last quoted, who, at the same time, distinguishes it from *natural* disorders, and particularly from LUNACY, with which these modern Doctors are willing to confound it, we chuse to adhere to the opinion of the sacred Writer.

* Sermon *On the Fall of Satan*, vol. x. † Matt. iv. 24.

In

In support of which, and to form a right judgment of the matter in question, it may be proper to consider what adverse part the DEVIL bore in disturbing the Economy of Grace.

Now, in the History of the FALL, recorded by Moses, to which the Writers of the New Testament perpetually allude, SATAN, or the *Tempter*, *Calumniator*, the old Serpent, or the *evil One*, (for by these names he is characterized in Scripture,) is represented as having instigated the *first man*, Adam, to disobedience; for which, by the *second Adam*, Jesus Christ, (who restored us to our lost inheritance) is denounced his punishment in these figurative terms, *the Seed of the Woman should bruise the Serpent's head**: explained in the New Testament, to be the final conquest and destruction of this enemy of mankind by our *Redeemer*. So that we may reasonably expect to find the *punishment* of the *Tempter* recorded in the History of our REDEMPTION, as his *crime* was recorded in the History of the FALL. And, indeed, this circumstance, so necessary to the story of the whole transaction, we meet with in the Gospel, on several occasions.

When the Disciples, whom Jesus had sent out to renounce their Mission, came back to their Master exulting in the power of their Ministry, he receives them as Conquerors, returning in triumph from their spiritual warfare—*I beheld* SATAN (says he) *as lightning fall from heaven*†. A strong and lively picture of the sudden precipitation of that *Prince of the Air* from the place where he had so long held his usurpation, hanging like a pestilential meteor over the sons of men.

The rise, therefore, of Christ's Kingdom, and the fall of Satan's, being thus carried on together, it would be strange indeed, if, in the Gospel, we should find no MARKS of the rage of Satan's expiring tyranny amidst all the salutary blessings of the rising Empire of Christ. But we find them in abundance. We find this enemy of our salvation, mad with despair, invoking all the powers of darkness to blast that *peace and good will towards men*, proclaimed by Angels on the birth-night of the Son of God. For when he understood, by his baffled attempts on his Lord and Master, that the SOCLS

* Gen. iii. 15. † Luke x. 18.

of

of Men had escaped his usurped Dominion, he turned his cruelty on their BODIES, in the most humiliating circumstances of pain and oppression that could dishonour or disgrace humanity: permitted, no doubt, to take a wider range at this decisive instant than at any other, either before or since, in order to illuminate the glories of his Conqueror.

Had the *first Adam* stood in the rectitude of his Creation, he had, on observing the Command given to him in Paradise, gained IMMORTALITY, and been placed above and beyond the reach of NATURAL and MORAL evil. His relapse back to MORTALITY brought *both* into the world. The office of the *second Adam* was to restore us to our Paradisaical State. But as the *immortality*, purchased for us by the Son of God, was unlike to that which became forfeit by the transgression of the *first man* in this particular, that it was not to commence immediately, but was reserved for the reward of a future state, it followed that both *physical* and *moral* evil were to endure for a season. Yet, to manifest that they were, in good time, to receive their final doom from the REDEEMER, it seems essential to his character that he should, in the course of his Ministry, give a convincing specimen of his power over *both*.

One part, therefore, of his Godlike labours was, we find, employed in curing all kinds of *natural* diseases. But had he stopped here amidst his conquests over *physical* evil, the full evidence of his Dominion over *both Worlds*, which, by his office, he was to restore to their primeval integrity, had remained defective.

Jesus, therefore, was to display his Sovereignty over *moral evil* likewise; and this could not be seen in the manner it was manifested over *natural* evil, but by a sensible Victory over SATAN; through whose machinations *moral evil* was brought into the World, and by whose temptations it was sustained and increased.

Hence it was that, amongst his amazing works of sanity and salvation, the CASTING OUT OF DEVILS is so much insisted on by the Writers of his life and death; he himself having informed them, that it was essential to the erection of his spiritual Kingdom—*If I* (says he) *cast out*

out Devils by the Spirit of God, THEN *the Kingdom of God is come unto you**.

Thus, from the very genius of the GOSPEL, from the nature and constitution of the System of GRACE, it appears that this was a real ejection of the *evil Spirit.*

But, besides this, Jesus and his Disciples, in their manner of working, and in the mode of recording what they worked, did every thing that might best display a real victory over SATAN.

Let the *Jews* of that time, let the *Diseased* themselves, be as much in an error as you are pleased to conceive them, in the matter of *Diabolical Possession,* yet no Believer will presume to think that JESUS was deceived in his own case; or was disposed to deceive others, when he informed his Historians of his *being led by the Spirit into the Wilderness, and of his being tempted there forty days of the* DEVIL†.—Whether any, or what part of this transaction passed in Vision, is not material to determine, since the *reality of the agency* is the same on either supposition; as its truth depended not on the mode of sensation, but on the infallible assurance of that agency. For Jesus, in his amazing humiliation, when he assumed *our nature,* was yet, without doubt, superior to those infirmities of it which arise from the delusions of sense; as such delusions would have been incompatible with the exercise of his divine Ministry. If, therefore, there was any mistake in this matter, it must be (I speak it with the most reverential horror) the designed contrivance of our blessed Master himself, who assures us, that *he was* not only *the way,* but THE TRUTH‡ likewise.

So far then is clear, that the *evil Spirit* was neither absent nor inactive when the Gospel was first opened to mankind.

In THIS TEMPTATION, he was permitted to try whether he could traverse the great work of human Redemption—*In his possession of men's bodies,* he seems to have been, in part, forced upon the attempt, that *the casting of him out,* by the power of Jesus, might evince Mankind that our restoration to LIFE was fully accomplished.

* Matt. xii. 28. † Luke iv. 1, 2. ‡ John xiv. 6.

Thus,

Thus, in the case of the man possessed in the country of the Gadarenes—The Devils, oppressed by the mighty hand of God, and ready to be cast out and sent into a place of torment, confess the superiority of their conqueror, and proclaim him to be the promised MESSIAH, at a time when he concealed this part of his Character, and was not certainly known by it even amongst his Disciples.

If it be asked, why the Devils proclaimed it? The answer is easy: It was to impede, or to cut off, the course of his appointed Ministry. On this account Jesus checks, or enjoins silence to them. Indeed, had all the attestation given by our Saviour to *real possessions* been no stronger than that which he gave in answer to those who said, He cast out Devils by Beelzebub, namely, that then, *Beelzebub's kingdom being divided within itself, must be brought to destruction**, the argument might be thought to labour a little; for if the power and operation of *Satan* or *Beelzebub* was a groundless fancy, as our Philosophers pretend, Jesus may not unreasonably be thought to argue *ad hominem*; which a Messenger from God might do without impeachment of his Character, though the concession on which he reasons were not strictly conformable to the reality of things. But when such a Messenger commands the Devils, whom he pretends to have cast out, not to discover his office or character, this is going a length, if there was no Devil in the case, which a Messenger from the God of Truth could never, surely, be authorized to engage in.

If we turn from Satan's *temptation* of Jesus to his cruel treatment of the Jews, we shall still find the same strong marks of *real agency*.

Be it granted, that both the Jews and Gentiles of that time were grown very fanciful and superstitious concerning *diabolic possessions*, and, consequently, that they often mistook *natural* for *supernatural* maladies; what follows, but that which we find provided against those false conclusions which weak or licentious men drew from thence?

The utmost care and attention has been given by the sacred Writers to *mark* out those cases of real possession,

* Matt. xii. 24, & seq.

which

which Jesus relieved, by some circumstance not equivocal, or what could not accompany an imaginary or natural disorder.

Thus, in the adventure recorded by three of the Evangelists*—when Jesus had eased the Demoniac, and his tormentors had obtained leave to go into *a herd of swine*; what other reason can be given, or, indeed, what better can be conceived, of their extraordinary request on the one hand, or permission on the other, than that this circumstance was to afford a certain MARK to distinguish a REAL from an *imaginary* Possession?

It is true, that the wild extravagance of human fancy may be able to form chimeras that shall affright the Raiser of them to distraction. Yet Brutes (we all know) have none of this dangerous faculty. Therefore, when we find great numbers of them stimulated, at once, to an instantaneous madness, we must needs conclude, that it was caused by some supernatural Agent, operating on their organs.

So admirably has our indulgent Master been pleased to guard this important Truth against the most plausible evasions of self-conceited men.

The strong impulse of a vitiated fancy, pushed forward by superstition, might be supposed able, without other agency, to produce these very extraordinary appearances.

To cut off, therefore, all escape from a forced concession of the mighty hand of God, compelling his most *averse* Creatures to acknowledge his Sovereignty, here are two cases obtruded on the most incredulous: The one is, SATAN's temptation of the Messiah; the other is, his *Possession* of brute Animals: In neither of which cases hath the *powers of imagination* any place. In the *first*, the divine Patient was above their delusions; in the *other*, the Brutal was as much below them.

If we turn from the FACTS which the Evangelists have recorded, to the EXPRESSIONS which they have employed, we shall have further reason to rest satisfied with the ancient interpretation.

The text says,—*They brought unto him all sick people that were taken with divers diseases and torments, and*

* Matth. viii.—Mark v.—Luke viii.

THOSE

THOSE WHICH WERE POSSESSED WITH DEVILS, *and* LUNATICS; *and he healed them.*

Here we find, that the disorder of those who are said to be POSSESSED WITH DEVILS, is precisely distinguished, not only from natural diseases and torments in general, but likewise from LUNACY in particular; that very disorder which the Antidemoniast is so willing to confound with supernatural agitations. Is it possible, therefore, to believe, that a Writer of any meaning, at the very time he is distinguishing *Lunacy* from *diabolical Possessions*, should confound these two disorders with one another? Yet, this is what these licentious Critics make him do, in compliance (they tell us) with an accustomed mode of speech. On the contrary, is it not certain, that the sacred Writer was the more intent to represent them as two very different disorders, for this very reason, their having many symptoms in common? a circumstance which hath made these men solicitous to *confound* what the Evangelist was careful to *distinguish*.

In a word, they who, after all these precautions taken by St. Matthew, and the rest, can believe that *Devils* and *Demoniacs* were used only as terms of accommodation, may well believe (as some of them profess to do) that the terms *Sacrifice*, *Redemption*, and *Satisfaction*, come of no better a House than one of the common figures of speech*.

III.

We now come to the third and last Class of MIRACLES, which, we say, demand the assent of every reasonable man, when proposed to him with full evidence of the Fact.

Of this kind are the *Miracles* in which the Deity immediately interposes, to vindicate the Credit of his own Predictions, when impious men have publicly combined to defeat and dishonour them.

The most eminent of this Class was the *miraculous* interposition of Heaven, which defeated JULIAN's attempt to rebuild THE JEWISH TEMPLE OF JERUSALEM.

When God found it expedient or necessary, in order to preserve the Memory and keep up the Knowledge of

* See note [L] at the end of this Book.

himself

himself amidst a corrupt world, running headlong into Polytheism and Idolatry, he chose a single Family, which, when spread out into a Nation or People, was to become the public repository of his holy Name, till the fulness of time should come, when, as he *promised by himself, all the earth should be filled with the glory of the Lord**.

This family was of the seed of Abraham; which, in compliance with the religious notions of those times, he was pleased to adopt for his peculiar People, under the idea of their *tutelar* Deity, or the *God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob*; and, the more effectually to secure the great end of their separation, assumed, likewise, the title and office of their KING or CIVIL GOVERNOR; having, first of all, communicated himself to them, as the Maker and Governor of the Universe.

Hence, the RELIGION he gave unto this People came under the idea of a LAW; and the LAW, amongst them, was, in the strictest sense, RELIGION, as having all the sanctions of a divine command.

From this short account of the JEWISH CONSTITUTION it appears, that RELIGION, which, elsewhere, had properly and justly *particulars only* for its subjects, had here the nation or community. And what, elsewhere, (as far as concerns the divine origin of Religion) is only a *private* matter, was here a public. For the Deity being both their *tutelary God* and *Civil Governor*, the proper object of his care was in either capacity, the collective Body.

Hence it follows, that the principal Rites of the Hebrew *Religion* and *Law* were to be performed in some determined Place. For the ideas of a *tutelary* God and *civil* Governor implied a local Residence; and a *national act*, arising from the relations springing out of these qualities, required a fixed and certain habitation for its celebration; and both together seemed to mark out the Capital of the Country for that use.

Such a practice, which the nature and reason of things so evidently point out, the Institutes of the Jewish Law expressly direct and enjoin.

During the early and unsettled times of the Republic, the Sacrifices prescribed by its Ritual were directed to be

*. Numbers xiv. 21.

offered

offered up at the door of an ambulatory *Tabernacle*; but when the People had perfected the Establishment ordained for them, and a magnific TEMPLE was erected for religious Worship, then their SACRIFICES were to be offered in that place at Jerusalem only.

Now, SACRIFICES constituting the essentials of their Worship, their *Religion* could not be said to exist longer than that celebration continued. But *Sacrifices* were to be performed in no place out of the Walls of their TEMPLE. So that when this *holy place* was finally destroyed, according to the prophetical predictions, the INSTITUTION itself became abolished. Nor was any thing more consonant to the genius of this Religion, than the assigning such a celebration of its principal Rites. The Temple would exist while they remained a People, and continued Sovereign. And when their Sovereignty was lost, the Temple-worship became precarious, and subject to the arbitrary pleasure of their Masters.—They destroyed this Temple; but it was not till it had lost its use. For the Rites, directed to be there celebrated, were relative to them only as a free-policied People.

So that this was, in reality, a total EXTINCTION of the Jewish Worship. How wonderful are the ways of God! This came to pass at that very period when a *new Revelation* from Heaven concurred with the blind transactions of civil policy, to supersede the LAW by the introduction of the GOSPEL: the last great work which completed the Scheme of HUMAN REDEMPTION.

To confound this admirable order of Providence was what induced the EMPEROR JULIAN to attempt the REBUILDING the JEWISH TEMPLE OF JERUSALEM. The vanity of the attempt could be only equalled by its impiety; for it was designed TO GIVE THE LIE TO GOD, who, by the mouth of his Prophets, had foretold that it should never be rebuilt. Here then was the most important occasion for a miraculous interposition, as it was to defeat this mad attempt. And thus in fact it was defeated, to the admiration of all mankind.

But as a large and full account of the whole affair hath been already given to the Public, in a Work entitled—JULIAN, *or a Discourse concerning the Earthquake and*

*fiery Eruption which defeated that Emperor's Attempt to rebuild the Temple at Jerusalem**; thither I refer the learned Reader, who will there meet with all the various evidence of the Fact, abundantly sufficient to support and establish it; together with a full confutation of all the cavils opposed to its certainty and necessity.

To conclude this subject with a recapitulation of what I undertook to prove, namely, that the MIRACLES in the Christian Dispensation, which exact credit of reasonable men, may be all comprised under one or other of these Divisions, viz.

I. Under that SPECIES OF MIRACLES which serves for CREDENTIALS to the MISSION of Jesus Christ and his first Disciples and followers.

II. Or under that which makes an essential part in the integrity or completion of the Gospel-System.

III. Or, lastly, under that in which the Deity immediately interposes, to vindicate the credit of his own predictions, when impious Men have entered into a combination to defeat and dishonour them.

Not that it is my purpose positively to brand, as FALSE, every pretended Miracle recorded in ecclesiastical and civil History, which wants this favourable capacity of being reduced to one or other of the *Species* explained above. All that I contend for is, that those Miracles, still remaining unsupported by the nature of that Evidence which I have shewn ought to force conviction from every reasonable Mind, should be at present excluded from the privilege of that conviction.

Indeed the greater part may be safely given up, for idle and knavish tales of monkish invention. Of the rest, which yet stand undiscredited by any considerable marks of Imposture, we may safely suspend our belief, till time hath afforded further lights to direct our judgment.

Nor will the confining our Assent to *Miracles*, thus brought within the limits of an apparent SUFFICIENT CAUSE, be less beneficial to *Religion* in general, than it is subversive of the vain *Philosophy* in vogue, which attempts to discredit all extraordinary interpositions of Providence whatsoever, as we shall now shew.

* See Vol. viii. of this Edit.

I. The

1. The bringing MIRACLES within these bounds will afford a mark of distinction, never to be effaced, between those of the GOSPEL, and those which PAGANISM and its *Advocates* object to us. For I may venture to affirm, that, amongst those pretended Miracles in the Pagan World, there cannot be found one that carries along with it any thing that bears the least resemblance to a SUFFICIENT CAUSE. And there is strong reason to believe, that the Deity, without such an occason, would never interfere amongst the Gentiles; because such an interposition would, besides the vanity of it, have a natural and direct tendency to rivet men in their idolatry.

But the principal use of confining MIRACLES within these bounds will be the giving an immediate check to FRAUD and SUPERSTITION, when in their full career, to abuse and enslave a foolish World. For that strange infirmity of the human mind, viz. *a fondness for the* MARVELLOUS (begot by a misconception of nature, and nursed by the pride of self-importance), always made the deluded multitude thankless and averse to those who would bring them to their senses.

—Cui sic extorta voluptas.

And if Men be so fond of the *Marvellous* for the mere pleasure of the ADMIRATION which it creates, what must be their zeal to propagate those *strange things*, in which Religion is supposed to be concerned? Every disorderly passion now conspires to blot and deform the fair face of Nature, with Prodigies and Portents.

Such frightful Visions, even the earliest Ages of Christianity raised up. *The Prodigies of* ANTICHRIST (says the Apostle) *have been after the working of Satan, with* POWERS *and* SIGNS *and* LYING WONDERS*.

This, it is true, should make THEOLOGIANS cautious; but it should not make our PHILOSOPHERS presumptuous or vain. For even these Intimados of Nature know no more of Her than what lies just before them, in common with those whom they most affect to despise: And all they know, if not a MIRACLE, is yet a MYSTERY.

Let these her Closet-acquaintance *steal*, as they are able, to her inmost recesses, they *can bring nothing* from

* 2 Thess. ii. 9.

thence concerning God's natural and moral Government, as the Poet finely expresses it,

—BUT UNDECIPHERED CHARACTERS,

which only teach us the need we have of a better Decipherer, than that REASON on which these men so proudly rely.

CHAP. VI.

BUT now, besides these extraordinary Gifts, properly called MIRACLES, with which the first Preachers of the *Gospel* were intrusted, for its more speedy propagation, they were endowed with another, and more complicated kind of supernatural Power, namely, PROPHECY, in which a MIRACULOUS power was eminently included.

With PROPHECY, or with that simpler species of divine Virtue, MIRACLES, was the Church of Christ at that time supplied; as one or the other was best suited to the various uses of Religion.

In explaining this matter, which the importance of the subject requires us to do more at large, it will be necessary just to repeat what has been observed before; that in the first propagation of a *new Religion* from Heaven, the Will of God must be attested by MIRACLES; since nothing less than this instant Evidence is sufficient to assure us of its divine original.

But when this hath been fully and largely afforded, the *Power of Miracles* (where *Miracles* do not make a constant and essential part in the nature of the *Dispensation*, as they did in the *Jewish*) is with good reason withdrawn from the Servants and Ministers of Religion: And the CHURCH is from thenceforth left, at least for some time, to support itself on the TRADITIONAL EXEMPLIFICATION of this evidence; something less forcible than the ORIGINAL RECORD, of which the first and better ages of Christianity had been in possession.

But by the time this MIRACULOUS power began to fail, another was preparing to supply its place, of still greater efficacy; I mean, that of PROPHECY.

For the sovereign Master, who no less manifests his constant PRESENCE to the *moral* than to the *physical* government

government of the World, has been graciously pleased to give to the *later* ages of the Church more than an equivalent for what he had bestowed upon the *earlier*, in beginning to shower down on his chosen servants of the NEW COVENANT the riches of PROPHECY as the power of working MIRACLES abated. So early, I say, was this preparation made for that stronger and more lasting support; a support not yet, indeed, improved into *Evidence*; nor was the *Evidence* wanted, while *Miracles*, in a sort, remained. Besides, it could not, in the nature of things, become *Evidence*, till some time after its first enunciation: for till the more considerable events of a PROPHECY, which contained the future and later fortunes of the *Gospel*, had arisen, and been brought, by degrees, into EXISTENCE, the *Prophecy* could afford no conviction of its truth.

Yet, in this wonderful disposition of things, we see the *divine Hand* by which they were conducted.

To proceed. PROPHECIES were now more clearly and simply, now more obscurely and enigmatically enounced, just as the nature of the subject or the circumstances of the time required.—Yet still we have ventured to call PROPHECY a stronger and more lasting Evidence than MIRACLES. And this will deserve our attention. The evidence from MIRACLES seems, by its nature, to lessen somewhat by time; while that from PROPHECY gathers strength by it, and grows more and more convictive, till the gradual and full completion of all its parts makes the splendour of it irresistible.

Hence the wisdom of the divine Disposer is still further seen, in making PROPHECY, not only the *strongest*, but the LAST and CONCLUDING Evidence of a *Religion*, which, as it was the completion of the whole scheme of REVELATION, so having (as it would seem) the largest portion of its course yet to run, that species of Evidence which does not lose, but gain strength, by time, was best fitted to accompany it to its utmost period.

But to go on with our more general reflections on the whole.

This DOUBLE EVIDENCE, in support of *Revealed Religion*, hath always been the same throughout every

mode of God's moral Dispensations. The records of sacred History confirm this Truth.

Under the Jewish economy, although MIRACLES, by reason of the peculiar form of the Republic, were necessarily attendant on its administration, throughout a course of many ages (that is, during all the time in which the affairs of this people were conducted by an *extraordinary Providence*), yet God's inspired Servants were, together with the power of working MIRACLES, endowed with the gift of PROPHECY. For, although the *extraordinary Providence*, and consequently MIRACLES, which made a part of it, continued much longer than would have been necessary, had MIRACLES, amongst the Jews been of no other use than they were in the Christian Church, viz. to evidence the divinity of the Revelation; yet as *that Providence*, and consequently this *miraculous* attendant on it, were to cease long before the abolition of the THEOCRACY; the other evidence of PROPHECY, in the absence of MIRACLES, was graciously bestowed on the Jewish Church likewise.

Hence the inspired Ministers of it, DANIEL in particular, foretold more circumstantially and minutely than the rest, the various fortunes of that Church and Republic, from its decay, in their own times, to the entire dissolution of it by the introduction of a better SYSTEM.

In the like manner St. JOHN, under the NEW COVENANT, did, by the same divine Spirit, predict the fortunes of the *Christian Church*; from the flourishing condition of it, in his own time, through all the disasters of the corrupt ages that followed, to the happy consummation of all things.

In both cases, for the reasons above given, PROPHECY could not be urged as instant evidence, at the time it was delivered, but was kept entire and reserved for the use of those ages when MIRACLES having long ceased in the *Christian* Church, and were declining in the *Jewish*, seemed to need this other and further support.

From all these, and from many other considerations to be further urged, it will appear, that, of this double Evidence to the truth of Revelation, viz. MIRACLES and PROPHECY, the latter, as we have said, is of superior force and efficacy.

We

We have already shewn its superiority in gaining by *Time* what the other loses. This advantage is further seen by its being less subject to the mistakes and fallacious impressions of *sense* than *Miracles* are.

But as this is a matter of much importance, it may be proper to explain and verify the assertion.

Both MIRACLES and PROPHECIES are indeed appeals to the *Senses*, but with this difference, that MIRACLES, however illustrious, such as those worked by the first propagators of our holy Religion, are subject to the cavils of Infidelity.

Of this, Dr. Middleton hath afforded a wonderful example; where he insinuates, and would seem to persuade us, that the *Voice from Heaven recognizing the Son of God*, was no other than a superstitious fancy of the later Jews called the BATH KOL; a fantastic kind of Divination of their own invention.—As groundless and scandalous as this cavil is, yet it must be owned, that the frame of the animal economy, in which a heated imagination is able to work strange appearances in the body, has given some countenance to infidelity, in its sceptical conclusions against *Miracles*. And though we have said enough to free those of the *Gospel*, and some others, confined within the reasonable bounds before laid down, from every imputation of this sort, yet *Miracles* being, by their very nature, open and liable to abusive interpretations, and *Prophecy* well secured from them, for this, and for the more weighty reasons given above, we conclude (as the crown of all) with the unerring declaration of the holy Apostle PETER; who, in his second general Epistle to the Churches, alluding to this *twofold evidence* for the truth of Revelation, namely MIRACLES and PROPHECY, after he had ended what he thought fit to say of the *first*, proceeds to the *other* in these words—WE HAVE ALSO A MORE SURE WORD OF PROPHECY—ἔχομεν ΒΕΒΑΙΟΤΕΡΟΝ τὸν ΠΡΟΦΗΤΙΚΟΝ λόγον—*a word, that may be more firmly relied on, and whose existence is more durable.* The word, βεβαιότερον, including both these senses. And we have shewn that the nature of PROPHECY contains these two qualities.

And they being most eminently comprised in the CAPITAL PROPHECY here described and characterized;

a more particular explanation of it may be naturally expected in this GENERAL VIEW of the Christian Religion.—

"We have not followed *cunningly devised fables* "(says the Apostle, ver. 16) when we made known unto "you the POWER AND COMING of our Lord Jesus "Christ, but were eye-witnesses of his Majesty."

17. "For he received from God the Father honour "and glory, when there was a VOICE to him from the "exceeding glory—This is my beloved Son, in whom I "am well pleased."

18. "And this *voice* which came from Heaven we "heard, when we were with him in the mount."

19. "WE HAVE ALSO A MORE SURE WORD OF "PROPHECY; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, "*as unto a light shining in a dark place, until the day* "*dawn, and the day-star arise in your hearts.*"

*There are few places, in the Scriptures of the New Testament, plainer than this before us; and yet there are none where interpreters have wandered further from the Apostle's meaning †.

This hath been principally owing to a mistake of the subject. These Interpreters supposed that St. PETER was here speaking of the PERSONAL CHARACTER OF JESUS; and thence concluded, that THE MORE SURE WORD OF PROPHECY, whereby he strengthens his argument, respected the *Prophecies* of the OLD TESTAMENT, which establish that PERSONAL CHARACTER.

But the Apostle is treating of a different thing; namely, of THE TRUTH OF THE GOSPEL IN GENERAL.

Which shews, that *the more sure word of Prophecy* regards a Prophecy of the NEW TESTAMENT.

One mistake produced, of course, another. For, on supposition, that the *personal Character of Jesus* was the thing meant, it would follow, that *by the power and coming of our Lord*, we are to understand his FIRST COMING; and then, indeed, *the word of Prophecy* must needs signify a Prophecy ALREADY FULFILLED. But

* From this place to the end, abridged and altered from Discourse *On the Rise of Antichrist.*

† See the altercations between Bishop Sherlock and Dr. Middleton, and their respective Advocates.

nothing is more certain than that the *Character* here given of that *Prophecy*, to which the Church is admonished to *take heed*, or pay its attention, confines us to one, but now, just beginning to attest its divine original—*it is a light shining in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day-star arise in our hearts*; that is, till a long series of events (yet in the womb of time) shall arise, to give testimony, by degrees, till the whole evidence concludes in one unclouded blaze of conviction. So that the *power and coming of our Lord* must needs mean his SECOND COMING.

Yet amongst the Interpreters just before censured, there are some more eminently absurd* than the rest. One of these is even desirous to have it believed, that by this *more sure word of Prophecy* is to be understood the Prophecy of ISAIAH, chap. xlii. ver. 1. although the Apostle has characterized this to be *a light shining in a dark place*, &c. *i. e.* not as convictive evidence at present, yet being a LIGHT, though *shining in a dark place*, it deserved our attention, till greater *lights* should arise, which would afford full conviction.

Now, could this be the *Character* of a Prophecy of the *Old Testament*; especially one of ISAIAH's, most of whose Predictions referred to, and had their completion in, JESUS, their great object? The *dawn* and *day-star*, here spoken of by the Apostle, as of a very distant light, was, in the time of that Prophet, already *risen* in the hearts of his countrymen, or it would never rise.

Let us, therefore, look out for some more reasonable Paraphrase of the sacred Text.—

—"That you may be assured (says the Apostle) we "have not *followed cunningly devised fables*, when we "described to you the power of our Lord at his SECOND "COMING, you should recollect what we have frequently "told you, of his FIRST; having been eye-witnesses of "the Majesty and *Miracles* attending it, *when there* "*came a voice to him from the exceeding glory*, &c.— "Now, the MIRACLES, which accompanied, and con- "firmed his mission, on his FIRST COMING, are surely "sufficient to gain credit to what we have, as often, told "you, of his SECOND. And, of this capital Truth, God

* See Mr. M.

"hath

" hath been graciously pleased to add still stronger ' evidence; by giving us A MORE SURE WORD OF ' PROPHECY."

—But the *general* subject of the EPISTLE will further support the truth of this Paraphrase.

—It is a farewell address to the CHURCHES, on his having received intimation, from the *holy Spirit*, of his approaching Martyrdom.

The Apostle begins with repeating to them [from ver. 3d to the 15th] that elegant summary of Christian Religion *, as was his wont, on all occasions, to inculcate. But, at this juncture, CONSOLATION being what the afflicted Church most needed, he takes his topic from the REWARDS, now supposed to be approaching, at the *second coming of our Lord* in the consummation of all things. PERSECUTION had soothed the Sufferers into this flattering error, which was now become general, and not likely to be soon redressed, while they continued unable (as they yet were) to distinguish the *two parts* of which this PREDICTION, concerning the *second coming* of our Lord, was composed. Each part had its distinct completion, commencing at different periods. The *first*, when our Lord came to judgment, on the JEWISH PEOPLE, in putting a complete period to their ECONOMY, by the destruction of their TEMPLE; The *other*, when he was to pass judgment on the whole race of mankind, and make a final end of the MUNDANE SYSTEM.

Or rather, to speak with more exactness, this prediction of the SECOND COMING was delivered in *two Prophecies* joined together; and, in intimation of the Jewish mode, mixed and interwoven with one another; generally as little understood, at the time of the delivery, as all those of a like import were, which had either a *secondary sense*, or included a *double subject*. But for a larger account of these, and particularly of the sort now in question, I beg leave to refer the Reader to the *sixth Section of the sixth Book* of this Work.

Such was the *Error*, which (as we say) gave birth to the *consolatory Epistle* here explained. But as all ERRORS, together with the accidental *good*, which, by the directing hand of Providence, they are made to

* See the Discourse on this text, Vol. x. of this Edit.

produce,

produce, are easily attended with much evil; so it was here.

At first, the *Error* produced sobriety, vigilance, and perseverance in the FAITH. But afterwards, it had a contrary effect. *There shall come in the last days* (says this Apostle) *scoffers, walking after their own lusts, and saying*, WHERE IS THE PROMISE OF HIS COMING? *For since the Fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation**.

After the censure of this Impiety, the Apostle proceeds to upbraid their ignorance of the natural constitution of the Earth; which is physically ordained to bring on its own destruction, by FIRE, in some future period, as heretofore, by the destruction of WATER: and that the *delay* of this dreadful Catastrophe, which affords these scoffs of Impiety, is not owing to the Lord's *slackness* in the performance of his *promise*; *but to his long-suffering; that all might come to repentance*†. He then describes this final dissolution of all things, by *fire*‡. Out of which (he tells them) shall arise (according to the promise of PROPHECY) *a new heaven and a new earth, wherein shall dwell righteousness*§. And with this the FAREWELL EPISTLE concludes.

Such being the subject of it, who can doubt but that a true account of the reasoning in the latter part of the *first* chapter is here given? and, consequently, that the Apostle's purpose is not to speak of indefinite *Prophecies already fulfilled* IN, OR UNDER, the OLD TESTAMENT, but of some precise Prophecy *to be fulfilled* under the NEW; in order as the several parts of it (extending through a course of many Ages) should come into existence.

To THIS the Church of Christ is bid TO TAKE HEED, as to *a more sure word of prophecy*. But had the description ended here, it would have been much too vague to enjoin our attention in so earnest and particular a manner. The Apostle, therefore, goes on to give it this characteristic Mark—that it was A LIGHT SHINING IN A DARK PLACE. A *Prophecy*, of which the principal parts were, at that time, surrounded and partly involved in obscurity and darkness; but yet, emitting so

* Ch. iii. 3. & seq. † Ver. 9. ‡ Ver. 10, 11, 12. § Ver. 13.

many

many scattered Rays, as to make a careful observer inclined to think some great scene was just beginning to open, which would amply reward our attention to this *light shining in a dark place*, by the change of its condition, first into a *dawn*; and then, into still clearer *day-spring*.

The Apostle having thus prepared our way to this SURER WORD, or superior excellence of PROPHECY, proceeds to acquaint us with the very IDENTICAL PROPHECY he had in his eye; which will now appear to be no other than the predictions of St. *Paul* and St. *John* concerning ANTICHRIST, or the future fortunes of the *Church*, under the usurpation of the MAN OF SIN; a prediction elegantly called, by way of eminence, THE WORD OF PROPHECY. For this *Man of Sin* began to *work* before the writing of this farewell Epistle. So St. Paul assures us—THE MYSTERY OF INIQUITY (says he) DOTH ALREADY WORK*. St. Peter, therefore, towards the conclusion of his Epistle, recurring again, as his subject required, to God's long-suffering, in the delay of his *second coming* to judge the world, adds, *even as our beloved* PAUL *also, according to the* WISDOM *given unto him, hath written unto you: as also in all his Epistles,* SPEAKING IN THEM OF THESE THINGS; IN WHICH ARE SOME THINGS HARD TO BE UNDERSTOOD, *which they that are unlearned and unstable wrest, as they do also the other Scriptures, unto their own destruction*†. Now what are these OBSCURE PARTS in St. Paul's Epistles, here characterized, but the *Prophecies* in St. John's Book of the REVELATIONS concerning ANTICHRIST‡, abridged by St. *Paul* in his Epistles, and referred to by St. *Peter*§.

* 2 Thess. ii. 7. † Chap. iii. 15, 16.

‡ See Sir Isaac Newton's Observations upon the Apocalypse of St. John, chap. i.

§ See the remainder of this argument in Discourse *On the Rise of Antichrist*, Vol. x. pp. 165, &c. of this Edit.

END OF THE NINTH BOOK.

NOTES
ON
BOOK IX.

P. 241. [A].

ON this point it will be sufficient to refer the reader to those two excellent Writers, Dr. Samuel Clarke and Mr. W. Baxter, for a full Demonstration of the *immateriality* of that Substance, in which the faculties of sense and reflection reside. [See Clarke's Tracts against Dodwell and Collins, and Baxter on the Nature of the Soul.] These Writers have gone much further than Locke and others on the same Subject; who contented themselves with shewing *the possibility; nay, great probability, that the thinking substance in us is immaterial.* [See Locke's Second Reply to the Bishop of Worcester, p. 600. of his Works.] But Clarke and Baxter have clearly proved, from the *discovered* qualities of a thinking Being, that the Soul cannot possibly be *material*, whatever *undiscovered* qualities it may be possessed of. And this conclusion was made (in my opinion) neither rashly nor at random. For, to unsettle our assurance in the truth of their Opinion, their Adversaries must shew that such *undiscovered* qualities are contrary to the qualities *discovered*; yet contrary qualities can never subsist together in the same substance, without one destroying the other. Hence, we understand the futility of Mr. Locke's *superinduction of the faculty of thinking to a system of Matter*; conceived, by that excellent Writer, in the modest fear of circumscribing Omnipotence; but Omnipotence is not circumscribed by denying its power of making qualities, destructive of one another, to reside in the same substance (for a power which produces nothing is no exercise of power); but by denying his power to change, together with consistent qualities, the *nature* of the substance in which those qualities reside. This power (supposing Mr. Locke contended for no more)

more) will be readily granted; but his argument will gain nothing by it. On the contrary, by changing *materiality* into *immateriality*, it ends the dispute with the Bishop; but to Mr. Locke's disadvantage, by proving, that the Soul, or thinking Substance in us, is *immaterial*.

P. 251. [B:] The impious notion of the human Soul's being part or portion of the Divine Substance, made the *Theistical* Philosophers give no credit to the Doctrine of a future state of rewards and punishments. [See the Divine Legation, book iii. § 4.] To avoid this impiety, certain Christian Enthusiasts taught that *eternity* was the condition of the Soul by *nature* as well as by *grace*. And so, before they were aware, fell into the very error of the Philosophers, which they were so anxious to avoid. For *eternity* being confessed by all to be one of the attributes of the Deity, it followed, that the human soul was indeed part or portion of the Divine Substance. This execrable frenzy, of which Religion could never get entirely free, (known by the name of SPINOZISM) hath of late appeared under its ugliest form in the Writings of Mr. W. Law, collected from the exploded ravings of Jacob Behmen. [See a book, intitled, An Appeal to all who doubt or disbelieve the Truths of the Gospel.]—But when learned men wake out of one delirium, it is not to recover their senses, but to fall back again into another; and that, generally, is its opposite. So it was here. The Philosophic Converts to the Christian Faith, in the first ages of the Church, were no sooner convinced of the folly of fancying that *the human Soul was a part of the Godhead*, than, in their haste to be at distance from that monstrous opinion, they ran suddenly into a contrary folly, and maintained, that the Soul had not one spark of the Divinity in her whole composition; but was MATERIAL as well as *mortal:* now degrading man to a brute, whom before they had exalted to a God. Nor hath this extravagance been destitute of (for what extravagance hath ever wanted) the patronage of modern Divines. We have seen it lately employed in support of a fresh whimsy, viz. THE SLEEP OF THE SOUL. One thing however seems to be defective in the Scheme; which is, the not rectifying the old error of a RESURREC-

TION.

TION. For, I apprehend, that when a MATERIAL Soul is once gone to Sleep, nothing but a RE-CREATION can awake it.

P. 258. [C.] Other *death* had been understood, viz. *Eternal life in misery.* But, to see what ill use hath been made of this portentous comment, we need only attend to *Collins* in *his discourse of free-thinking.* "We "learn in the *Old Testament*, (says he) that Adam by "eating the forbidden fruit subjected himself and all his "Posterity to death. But the *New Testament* TEACHES "US TO UNDERSTAND, *by death, eternal life in misery*; "and from thence, we know that GOD HAD BUT ONE "WAY to put mankind in a capacity of enjoying immortal "happiness." p. 153. Having given, in this buffoon manner, so absurd and monstrous a picture of REDEMPTION, (to the composition of which the School Divines had greatly contributed) he, and his free-thinking colleagues, hoped that their Doctrine of *Christianity's being only a republication of the Religion of Nature* would go down the easier. And they well enough understood how to manage that unscriptural error to their advantage; as may be seen by Tindal's book, intitled, Christianity as old as the Creation; which combats the Christian Revelation, under cover of the absurd concessions of certain latitudinarian Divines of a later date. These concessions, Tindal miscalls the PRINCIPLES OF CHRISTIANITY. Hence this formidable book became one continued thread of contemptible sophistry from beginning to end. Yet I remember the time when the false terror of it alarmed the whole body of the Clergy, for the *danger* of the Church, who were but just recovered from the *Sacheverel-crisis.*

P. 259. [D.] The REMONSTRANTS, fearing that this interpretation of the text might give countenance to the School doctrine of ORIGINAL SIN, deny that *Infants* are here meant, by *those who had not sinned*, &c. But the fear is vain. It was *death*, and not *damnation, which reigned from Adam to Moses.* The expression—Καὶ ἐπὶ τὸς μὴ ἁμαρτήσαντας, &c.—implies it was a part only of the human species which was *free from sinning after the similitude*

similitude of Adam's transgression; or *the being without sin*. And what part could this be but the mediatine?

P. 269. [E.] It is true, that notwithstanding the conformity of this language in the *Revelations* to that of Peter and to the Gospel of John, some Critics, and particularly Grotius, would have the text in the *Apocalypse*, which says,—*all that dwell upon the Earth shall worship him whose names are not written in the Book of Life, of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world*—to be thus understood—*The Book of Life written from the foundation of the World*—and not as here translated—*Christ slain from the foundation of the World*. However, both the one and the other sense infers the same truth; for if *the Book of Life* [of the Lamb slain] *was written from the foundation of the world*, it is plain, that the *Lamb slain*, or the *sacrifice* of his death, *was preordained from the foundation of the World*.

P. 272. [F.] The reason why Jesus, at the first publication of the Gospel, refers so little to the FALL, which concerned all mankind, and so much to his MESSIAHSHIP, which directly concerned only the Jews, is apparent; his Mission was first directed to the *house of Israel*. He left his Apostles to carry on their Ministry of the Gospel, to the *Gentiles*. Hence St. Paul, who was more eminently *the Apostle of the Gentiles*, is so explicit in his account of the RESTORATION FROM THE FALL. This furnished a handle to Lord Bolingbroke, to affirm, with equal ignorance and malice, that—*Paul preached a* NEW GOSPEL, *different from that of Jesus*.

P. 286. [G.] A learned and serious Writer*, in a late book, intitled, Observations and Enquiries relating to the various parts of ancient History†, hath a chapter concerning HUMAN SACRIFICES; which he thus introduces—*One would think it scarce possible that so unnatural a custom as that of* HUMAN SACRIFICES *should have existed in the world. But it is certain, that it did not only exist, but almost universally prevail.* p. 267. Our account of the origin of this *unnatural custom* will

* Mr. Bryant. † Printed in quarto, 1767.

much

much abate the wonder. However, the learned Writer solves the difficulty with much ease; by deriving it from the *Command to Abraham.* And here, before I enter on the matter, permit me to repeat, what I have before observed, that it indicates an odd turn of mind (however general it may be), which disposes the Learned to seek for the origin of the superstitious rites of antiquity, rather in the casual adventures of particular men, than in the uniform workings of our common nature*.

But the learned Writer fancies his solution is much strengthened by the general notion of Antiquity, that the ΑΝΘΡΩΠΟΘΥΣΙΑ was a *Mystical Sacrifice.* Let us examine his reasoning on this head. Mr. Bryant having given us, from the fragment of Sanchoniatho, what relates to IL or KRONUS's sacrifice of his only Son (by which, indeed, it appears, that *human Sacrifice* was not a conceit of yesterday; the Author of that fragment plainly deriving his story from this part of the Abrahamic History), goes on in these words, "They [human sacrifices] "were instituted probably in consequence of a *prophetic* "*Tradition*, which I imagine had been preserved in the "family of *Esau*; and transmitted, through his pos-"terity, to the people of Canaan," p. 291.

To this, let me, first of all, observe, that the supposition of a *prophetic tradition* rests entirely on the truth of *my peculiar idea* of the *nature of the command to Abraham*, viz. That it was a *mere scenical representation, given at the patriarch's earnest request.* For on this idea only could the *command* be considered as a *prophecy.* But this is doing too much honour to my hypothesis, still held, I suppose, by the more orthodox, to be a paradox; and, what is still worse, it greatly weakens the learned Writer's reasoning; for a *scenical representation*, which must naturally end as this did, in a prohibition of the commanded sacrifice, could hardly induce any one, who went upon the grounds, or in consequence of a *prophetic Tradition*, to think that *human Sacrifices* were acceptable to the Deity. But the truth is, *this prophetic Tradition*, in the family of Abraham, is merely *gratis dictum.* We find not the least footsteps of it in the more circumstantial History of the other branch of Abraham's Family, the

* See the Divine Légation.

Patriarchal; which was most concerned to preserve it, had there been any such. Besides, how this *commanded Sacrifice*, which was forbidden to be perpetrated, should encourage human sacrifices, before men had steeled themselves, by long use, in the practice of so unnatural a crime, is hard to conceive. It is true, that this argument will lose somewhat of its force, when we suppose the *command* was given to a family which were no strangers to *human Sacrifices*. This is observed purely in reverence to truth; but, be this as it will, it subverts the fancy of the *Abrahamic original*. For the fact seems to be, that, at the time this *Command* was given to the Patriarch, the Gentile world was deeply plunged into this diabolic Barathrum: which, though the descendants of Esau possibly had not escaped, yet the line of Isaac certainly had.

The Mosaic account of the State of Religion in the Abrahamic times, shews that it was extremely depraved. For though the iniquity of the *Amorites was not yet full* *, yet that of their neighbours, in Sodom and Gomorrah, we know, was. These considerations reasonably induced *Philo the Jew*, in his *Discourse concerning Abraham*, to suppose that *human Sacrifices* were in use before the time of Abraham. And Marsham, one of the best modern Critics concerning ancient times, declares, without hesitation, in favour of this humiliating circumstance; and our admirable Spencer thinks, there is so little reason to ascribe the original of *Infanticide* to the *command to Abraham*, that, unless the History of that command be told very lamely and imperfectly, it affords very strong arguments against that inhuman practice. But it is not generally the way of Scripture to reprobate a bad practice before it has been conceived or committed †. Hence we may fairly collect, that *human Sacrifices* were in use before the *command to Abraham*. But what need we

* Gen. xv. 16.

† Probe novi quamplurimos alia omnia de ritus hujus nefarii fonte sentire, quasi ex Abrahami filium suum offerentis, historia corrupta et depravata profluxissent. Huic autem sententiæ fidem adhibere nescio, cum historia illa nisi planè mutilata, magna præbeat contra morem illum inhumanum argumenta; et verisimile sit multas Gentes liberos suos immolare solitas, de Abrahami exemplo, ne vel fando quicquam audivisse. De Leg. Hebræo, ritualibus, L. 11. C. 13. Sect. 3.

more

more to prove the fact in question, than this, That, if the account, here given, of the origin and progress of *Sacrifice* be the true, (as it hath the fairest claim of being so received, since the first use, and all the gradual abuses of it, till it sunk into the horrid Rite in question, may be understood, and understood only on this simple Principle, the uniform workings of our common nature) human Sacrifices must needs have preceded that æra.

What follows, in the learned Writer, as a strong confirmation of his system, is this, *that* CHILD-SACRIFICE was a type or representation of SOMETHING TO COME. Now, if by *Child-sacrifice* he means the *command to Abraham*, this we allow and even contend for. But, if he means that the specific rite of Child-sacrifice was understood by Sacrificers, either Jewish or Gentile, to be a type or representation of SOMETHING TO COME, I think he speaks without the least proof.—What he adds, one knows not what to make of.—*Child-sacrifice* (says he) *is the only instance of any Sacrifice in the Gentile world which is said to be* MYSTICAL.—For, if by *mystical* he means, *a type of something to come*, this has been answered already. But if by *mystical* we are to understand, what was *so* called by the Gentiles in their Sacrificial Rites, almost all of them were *mystical*; that is, had a meaning subjoined, not obvious, nor intended to be obvious to the uninitiated, or the *Profane*. All their *secret Rites*, in which *Sacrifice* bore a principal part, abounded so much in hidden meanings of this sort, that these Rites were called MYSTERIES by way of eminence.

But if, after all, this TEKNOΘΥΣΙΑ or *Child-sacrifice* had the *plain* meaning which I have given to it, and not the *mystical* of the learned Writer, what becomes of his whole hypothesis?—That it had no other meaning, than the plain one, I appeal to the Authority of an *inspired* Writer. MICAH, without doubt, understood the true Origin, and consequently, the right import of *Child-sacrifice*; and he delivers my sense of it, in these words—*Will the Lord be pleased with thousands of Rams, or with ten thousands of Rivers of Oil?* SHALL I GIVE MY FIRST-BORN FOR MY TRANSGRESSION, THE FRUIT OF MY BODY FOR THE SIN OF MY SOUL*?

* Ch. vi. ver. 7.

Here, we see, conformably to what I have delivered concerning *Child-sacrifice*, that the idea the Gentiles had of it, (for, to the *Gentile*, not to the *Jewish* sacrifices, the Prophet here alludes, as will be shewn hereafter) was simply, and solely, this, *the very highest atonement that man could make for his transgressions*, as it was the offering up what was most dear to the offender. The Prophet, therefore, puts it in the number of *expiatory Sacrifices*. But had that, which the learned Writer contends for, been the true and ancient notion of the τεκνοθυσια, one can hardly think that, at a time when the Prophets were gradually opening the nature of the NEW DISPENSATION, *Micah* would have let slip so fair an occasion of considering it under that Christian idea.

We may now see, for what reason *Child-sacrifice* came to be reckoned a MYSTERIOUS WORSHIP; it was done, to withdraw the observation of the People from so horrid a rite, when considered only in its simple use; for nature is rarely so far debauched, as to behold, with indifference, the violation of its most instinctive appetites. So that the enormity was to be covered by some far-fetched invention of superior excellence of virtue, which preferred the rights of the Divinity to all human obligations. Thus, when the Worshippers were apt to revolt at *Sacrifices* extremely cruel or libidinous, the Priests secured their own credit, and the honour of their God, by the intervention of a *spiritual meaning*. And *human Sacrifices* became *mysterious* for the same reason that the impudent procession of the *Phallus*, in the corrupted Rites of Bacchus and Osiris, was taught to convey the high matters of REGENERATION, and a *new life*.

I have been the longer on this question, because, if human Sacrifices should be thought to have had their original from the *Command to Abraham*, it might seem to give some colour (which was far from the intention of this very learned and worthy man) to the calumny of the Deists, who assert, that HUMAN SACRIFICES MADE A PART OF THE MOSAIC RITUAL. For if the τεκνοθυσια prefigured the *Sacrifice on the Cross*, or, as the learned Writer expresseth it, *was a type or representation of something to come*, it softens a little this infidel Paradox. The *Poet* VOLTAIRE hath repeated the calumny over

and

and over, as if the Bible was still shut up, not only from the people in general, but (what perhaps would have been attended with less injury to Religion) from THESE POETS in particular.

And now, this more serious question (in the midst of one less important, viz. *the origin and progress of sacrifice in general*) will deserve a severe examination.

VOLTAIRE, in a thing he calls, "An Essay on general "History," accuses the LAW, in these Words—"The "Jewish Law seems to permit these [human] Sacrifices. "It is said in Leviticus, that *none devoted which shall* "*be devoted of men shall be redeemed, but shall surely* "*be put to death**." The Jewish Books bear evidence, that when the Israelites overran the little country of Canaan, they massacred in most of the villages, men, women, and children, because they had been DEVOTED. On this Law it was that "*Jephtha* sacrificed his "daughter†."

1. This whole calumny I shall clear away first of all, by the most express prohibitions of the LAW, together with the declarations of the PROPHETS; both of which execrate every species of *human Sacrifice*.

2. And then examine and explain all those passages of Scripture, which seem to have given a handle to this impious charge.

3. Concluding, in the third place, with a confutation of that censure of inhumanity towards the inhabitants of Canaan urged by Voltaire, to support his main accusation of HUMAN SACRIFICES, and urged as if it were itself in the number of such Sacrifices.

I.

In my entrance on the first head, let me previously observe, that the earliest direction for SANCTIFICATION, that is, (in the language of Moses) for SACRIFICE, is of

* Ch. xxvii. ver. 29.

† La Loi des Juifs semblait permettre ces Sacrifices. Il est dit dans Levitique; *si une ame vivante a été promise à* DIEU *on ne pourra la racheter, il faut qu'elle meure.* Les Livres des Juifs reportent que quand ils envoluirent le petit pais des Cananéens, ils massacrerent dans plusieurs villages, les hommes, les femmes, les enfans—parce qu'ils avoient été devoués. C'est sur cette Loi que furent fodes les serments de *Jephthé* qui sacrifia sa fille, &c. Oeuvres de M. de Voltaire, Tom. xiii. p. 227. 8 Ed. 1756, 8vo.

the *first-born*, expressed in these words*, SANCTIFY *unto me all the first-born, whatsoever openeth the womb amongst the Children of Israel, both of man and beast; it is* MINE. This is declared to be for a memorial of God's *smiting Egypt in favour of his chosen people.—All the first-born of the Children of Israel are* MINE, *both man and beast: on the day that I smote the first-born in the land of Egypt, I* SANCTIFIED *them for myself*†.

But from this *Sanctification* or SACRIFICE, *Man* and *unclean animals* were excepted, and *redeemed*. The *redemption* of the first-born of man is thus settled and explained—"I have taken (says the text) the LEVITES for "all the FIRST-BORN of the Children of Israel: and I "have given the *Levites* as a gift to *Aaron* and his Sons, "*to do the service* of the children of Israel, in the taber-"nacle of the Congregation‡." The *redemption* of the *first-born* of *unclean animals*, with a repetition of the redemption of Men, is thus expressed:—*Every firstling of an ass shalt thou redeem with a Lamb—and all the first-born of man, amongst thy Children shalt thou redeem*§. The redemption-money, for both, is given to *Aaron* and his Successors‖; to whom the whole tribe of *Levi* was assigned for a vicarious (and in lieu of a more general) *sanctification* of the first-born of man.

This *redemption* was not on account of personal favour to a *chosen people*, but in abhorrence of HUMAN SACRIFICES, as appears plainly both from the LAW and the PROPHETS.

Moses, on his delivery of the LAW, thus solemnly forbids all curious inquiry concerning the Pagan rites of Worship, in the Nations round about them; *Inquire not after their* GODS, *saying, how did these nations* SERVE *their Gods?* EVEN SO WILL I DO LIKEWISE. The reason of the prohibition follows, they practised the horrid enormity of *Child-sacrifice—For every abomination to the Lord,* WHICH HE HATETH, *have they done unto their Gods*; FOR EVEN THEIR SONS AND THEIR DAUGHTERS HAVE THEY BURNT IN THE FIRE TO

* Exod. xiii. 2. † Numb. viii. 17.—and Exod. xiii. 14, 15.
‡ Numb. viii. 18, 19, and to the same purpose, Ch. iii. 12, 13—45.
§ Exod. xiii. 13. ‖ Numb. xviii. 15, 16.

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THEIR GODS*. The dangerous curiosity here restrained, was not on account of the number and nature of the Gods of Canaan. For the striking absurdity of their *Theogony* or original, and the impiety of their *Mythology* or history, would have served to attach the Israelites more firmly to the LAW. The prohibition only respected an inquiry into the Canaanitish *modes of worship*, or, as it is better expressed in the text,—HOW *these nations served their Gods*. And though this inquiry might at first, arise from nothing else than a wanton curiosity, yet the Legislator intimates that it would end in apostasy from the LORD OF HOSTS—*even so will we do likewise*; that is, we will use those Pagan rites in the service of the God of Israel; for they were little in danger, so early, to use Canaanitish rites in the service of the Gods of Canaan. Besides, the caution here is not against IDOLATRY but INFANTICIDE. Nor could they be much disposed to forsake the God of Israel for the Gods of Canaan, at the very time they were so successfully marching, under the auspices of Moses, to exterminate that devoted people. He therefore could scarce conceive that, at this time, they needed such a caution. For, the reason he gives for restraining this hurtful inquiry is, lest they should worship their own God with Pagan rites; especially this most abominable of all, INFANTICIDE. And there was the more need of this caution, since the *first-born of man and beast*, in Israel, were to be *sanctified to the Lord*; and though the first-born of man was redeemed, while the first-born of the *clean beasts* were sacrificed, yet the love of corrupt and idolatrous Rites might give some propensity to a fatal mistake, and to slip in *Sacrifice* instead of *sanctification*.

Afterwards when the Israelites became polluted with the infernal stains of *Infanticide*, the PROPHETS never ceased to proclaim aloud God's abhorrence of this impiety. For, in order to impress upon the paganized or apostate Israelites a due sense of their frequent defections, it was found necessary for these his messengers thoroughly to probe the consciences of such hardened wretches, which had been seared with the *fires of Moloch*.

* Deut. xii. 30.

Sacred History informs us how severely *Ahaz* was punished for his multiplied Idolatries; but principally for his "burning his Children in the fire, after the abomi-"nations of the Heathen [the Canaanites] whom the "Lord had cast out before the Children of Israel*."—*They sacrificed* (says the Psalmist) *their sons and their daughters unto Devils—the Idols of Canaan—and the Land was polluted with blood—insomuch that he abhorred his own inheritance*†.—"They have built the "high places of Baal (says Jeremiah) to burn their Sons "with fire, for burnt-offerings to Baal‡." And again—*they caused their Sons and their Daughters to pass through the fire, to Molech*§. Ezekiel, likewise, accuseth them of having caused their *Sons to pass through the fire to* DEVOUR *them*‖. But further, it would seem, by the following words of Jeremiah, that these impious sacrifices were offered, by the unnatural Jews, to the God of Israel himself—"The Children of Judah have done "evil *in my sight*, saith the Lord; they have set their "abominations *in the house which is called by my name*, "to pollute it, and they have built the high places of "Tophet, which is in the valley of the Son of Hinnom, "to burn their Sons and their Daughters in the fire, "*which I commanded them not, neither came it into my* "*head***." The concluding words seem to intimate that these Apostates pretended to have received such a command; or with what propriety was it so formally denied? Possibly they might pervert the famous passage in Leviticus††; of which more hereafter.—However, the whole of the text informs us clearly, that *Child-sacrifice* sometimes polluted the altars of the Temple. Ezekiel seems to confirm the same thing: "Moreover, this they have "done unto me; they have *defiled my Sanctuary, in the* "*same day, and have profaned my Sabbaths*. For when "they had *slain their Children unto their Idols*, then "*they came, the same day, into my Sanctuary to pro-*"*fane it, and lo! thus have they done in the midst of* "*mine house*‡‡."—i. e. "When they had slain Children

* 2 Chron. xxviii. 3. † Psalm cvi. 37, 38. 40. ‡ Ch. xix. ver. 5.
§ Ch. xxxii. 35. ‖ Ch. xxiii. 37. ** Ch. vii. 30, 31.
†† Ch. xxvii. 28, 29. ‡‡ Ch. xxiii. 38, 39.

"to

" to their idols, they, on the same day, offered the like " horrid sacrifice to me."—And we know, it was their usual practice, amidst their defections, to join *idol-worship* to the worship of the God of Israel.

The sacred Historian is still more express to this purpose; when he thus speaks of the wicked king Manasseh—*He built altars in the house of the Lord—and he built altars for all the Host of Heaven, in the two Courts of the house of the Lord,* and HE MADE HIS SONS TO PASS THROUGH THE FIRE; *and observed times, and used enchantments,* &c.*

On the whole, the gross IMMORALITY of this horrid Rite, was that to which the abhorrence of God was principally, and often solely, directed. This truth would appear certain (did Scripture afford no other evidence) from the warning given by Moses to his People, on their going to take possession of the Promised Land.

But a decisive passage in Isaiah cuts off the subterfuge of our Philosophers, who are ready to suppose that the declared abhorrence of *human Sacrifices,* so often repeated in Scripture, is confined to such as were directed to an IDOLATROUS OBJECT; for the Prophet, in the very place referred to, speaking in the name of God, declares the utmost detestation of *human Sacrifices* when offered to himself: For, speaking to those immoral Israelites, who imagined they could atone for their vices by ritual observances, he tells them, that even *legal sacrifices,* when offered to him with corrupt dispositions, were as displeasing to him, as those abominable *human Sacrifices* would be, which the Law of Nature condemns. —*He that killeth an ox, is as if he had slain a* MAN; *he that sacrificeth a lamb, as if he cut off* A DOG'S NECK†. Here, we see the ritual worship, commanded by God, is opposed to the *Sacrifice of Man,* abominated by the Law of Nature; and to the Sacrifice of a Dog, the thing most abhorred by the Law of Moses; in whose ritual this animal was held so totally unclean, that *the hire of a whore* and the *price of a Dog,* are put together as equally unfit to be brought into *the house of the Lord*‡.

* 2 Kings xxi. 4, 5, 6. † Chap. lxvi. 3. ‡ Deut. xxiii. 18.

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We now come to those two capital Passages, on which the Enemies of Religion found their impious Charge. The one, they consider as an indispensable COMMAND; the other as an EXAMPLE, adapted to inforce the execution of it.

The pretended *Command* is in *Leviticus*,, and contained in these words:—NONE DEVOTED, WHICH SHALL BE DEVOTED OF MEN, SHALL BE REDEEMED, BUT SHALL SURELY BE PUT TO DEATH*.

Here is a *Law*, which our Philosophers, in their great sagacity, conceived did enjoin something. But being strangers to the subject, and ignorant of the phrascology, with heads likewise full of mischief, they discovered HUMAN SACRIFICES in a place where Moses was speaking of quite another thing.

The Chapter, in which this *Law* is found, contains directions for the making, and for the performance of Vows; a mode of obligation which had a natural place in a government THEOCRATICAL; where *civil* matters of obedience were intimately connected with *religious*.

Now, that capital Command given to the Chosen People, TO EXTERMINATE THE CANAANITES, a command so necessary to be observed, for the preservation both of their *civil* and *religious* Systems, needed, above all things, frequent repetitions of the sacred tie of Vows for its more exact performance; some of the softer as well as stronger passions of our Nature pushed forward by the delusions of self-interest, being always at hand to defeat or retard the divine sentence denounced against an INCORRIGIBLE People (of which more hereafter). The repetition of *Vows*, therefore, for the speedier accomplishment of this great and laborious event (just like the repetition of oaths of allegiance in common states for the better security of the establishment) was enjoined, or at least encouraged, by the Leaders of the Jewish people.

Sometimes the Vow was made by the People, in a Body; like that we find in the Book of *Numbers*—"And "Israel vowed a *Vow* unto the Lord, and said, If thou

* Levit. xxvii. 29.

"wilt,

" wilt, indeed, deliver this people [the Canaanites] into " my hand, then *I will utterly destroy their Cities.* And " the Lord hearkened unto the *Voice* of Israel; and de- " livered up the Canaanites: and *they utterly destroyed* " *them and their Cities**." Sometimes again, the vow was made by Particulars; by such whose power or situation best qualified them for the execution of this primary COMMAND: and to these, and for this sole purpose, was this strangely mistaken Text directed. " —NONE DEVOTED, WHICH SHALL BE DEVOTED " OF MEN," (or, as it is explained in the immediately preceding verse,—*no devoted thing, which a man shall devote unto the Lord*)—" shall be redeemed, but shall " be surely put to death†." These *Vows* were called the SANCTIFYING or DEVOTING *men* or *things.* In which, indeed, the Language of Religion is employed; and very *naturally*, for the reason given above. But to prevent the abusive interpretation of such *Vows*, in the manner of our PHILOSOPHERS, by suffering more of *Religion* than the mere language to enter into the idea of them, the People are forbidden to extend their *vows* to what God himself had *sanctified*, such as the *first-fruits.* —*Only the firstling of the beasts, which* (says Moses) *should be the Lord's firstling, no man shall sanctify it*‡. But if *man* was, for this reason, not to sanctify the first-fruits of *beasts*, much more was *he* restrained from sanctifying the first-fruits of *Man*; since the *first-fruits of Man* were not to be put to death (like those whom human Vows had devoted), but to be *redeemed.*

In a word, *the men here devoted by men, and not to be redeemed*, were NO SACRIFICES AT ALL, as the first-fruits of the Children of Israel WERE, and, therefore, to be *redeemed*; but enemies taken in battle, to whom no quarter had been given; and whose lives, by the Law of Arms, were at the disposal of the Conqueror. M. Voltaire's ignorance of the *Law of Moses*, which occasions him to mistake a MILITARY EXECUTION for a RELIGIOUS SACRIFICE, might have been well excused, had he forborne to abuse what he did not understand. But to know his Virgil no better is a disgrace indeed.

* Numb. xxi. 2, 3. † Levit. xxvii. 29. ‡ Ver. 26.

" Quis

" Quis ILLAUDATI nescit Busiridis aras?"

says the great Poet, in plain detestation of *human Sacrifices*. Yet in the funeral Rites of *Pallas*, directed by the Hero of the Poem, (the Model of Religious Piety and civil wisdom) the captives taken in war are slain at the lighted Pile, without the least mark of the Poet's censure or disapprobation.

" Vinxerat, et post terga manus quos mitteret umbris
" Inferias, cæso sparsuros sanguine flammam."

For their lives were forfeited by the Law of Arms, and only taken with a little more ceremony than is, at present, in use: the military execution being often performed at Tombs and Altars: for in the Pagan World *Superstition* had occasioned a confused mixture of things, sacred and profane. But in the Jewish Republic, where the Church and State were incorporated, this commixture made no other confusion than what arises from the mistakes of Men, ignorant of the nature of that Sacred Economy.—Their God was their *King*; and their government in consequence was *Theocratical*. So that every act of State was in a certain sense, though not in the common one, an act of Religion. Obedience to the LAW was inforced by a Vow; and slaughter in and after Battle, a DEVOTEMENT to the *Lord of Hosts*; in support of the civil command to exterminate the Canaanites.

But besides the singular Form of the Jewish Republic, which brought in the use of this language, the very genius of the People, modelled, indeed, on a *theocratic* administration, disposed them to improve that mode of speech; so that matters merely civil and domestic are conveyed to us in the style of Religion.

Thus highly coloured, both in the *Camp*, and in the *Temple* of the *Lord of Hosts*, was the language of the Jewish People. Which gave a pretence to the detestable Spinosa, to insinuate, that the whole of the Mosaic Religion consisted only in a SACRED PHRASEOLOGY. Though what he insinuates proves only, yet proves fully, that the DEVOTEMENT in question was a civil, not a sacrificial *Rite*. " Judæi (says he) nunquam causarum mediarum " sive particularium faciunt mentionem, nec eas curant, " sed Religionis ac pietatis, sive, ut vulgo dici solet, devo-

" tionis causa, ad Deum semper recurrunt. Si enim, " ex. gr. pecuniam mercatura lucrati sunt, eam a Deo " oblatam aiunt; si aliquid, ut fit, cupiunt, dicunt, " Deum eorum cor disposuisse; si aliquid etiam cogitant, " Deum id iis dixisse aiunt," &c.*

Having now examined the pretended PRECEPT or Command; and shewn that it has no relation to HUMAN SACRIFICE, but to quite another thing; we proceed to the EXAMPLE, the case of JEPHTHAH: for, *on the Law of human Sacrifices* (says the Poet Voltaire) *it was, that Jephthah, who sacrificed his Daughter, founded his oath of Devotement.*—As this EXAMPLE hath given more alarm to the Friends of Religion than it deserves, and drawn them into forced and unnatural constructions of his rash and foolish Vow, it may be proper to consider the Man and his Manners, fairly and at large.

JEPHTHAH†, a Bastard son of *Gilead*, by an Harlot, being cast out from a share of his Paternal Inheritance, by the legitimate Issue, took refuge in a strange land. What effects this expulsion must have on his religious Sentiments, we may learn from the case of DAVID; who thus expostulates with Saul, on his exile—" If (says he) " they be your Counsellors, who have advised you to " this unjust usage of me,—*cursed be they before the* " *Lord*; *for they have driven me out this day from* " *abiding in the Inheritance of the Lord*, saying, GO, " SERVE OTHER GODS‡." Now, if *David*, so learned and zealous in the LAW, was exposed at least to this inevitable temptation, by his exile in a foreign land, what must we think of *Jephthah* in similar circumstances? who had nothing of David's knowledge of the *Law*, and consequently none of his *zeal* for its support. In this foreign Land, *Jephthah* associated himself to a dissolute Band of Outlaws, who lived upon rapine and violence: not (it is confessed) the most discreditable profession, in those early

* Tract. Theol. C. I. This was said by *Spinosa* in order to decry the MIRACLES recorded in *Scripture*. But with the usual luck of every attempt of the same kind. For were this very exaggerated account a true one, a stronger proof, of the reality and frequency of *Miracles*, could hardly be conceived in the nature of things. Since no People but such who had lived under a real THEOCRACY, could have contracted a turn of mind productive of so singular a *Phraseology*.

† Judges xi. ‡ 1 Sam. xxvi. 19.

ages

ages of barbarous manners. Amongst these men, he soon got to be the leader, and a distinguished Chief in all their lawless expeditions. So that his fame for military atchievements filled all the Regions round about.

At this time, the Israelites in punishment for one of their defections from their God and King, were labouring under the oppression of the idolatrous Borderers. And the *Amorites* making an excursion into *Gilead*; the Israelites of this place, as most immediately concerned, sought to provide for themselves, as well as for their brethren (now become repentant), some Leader of superior power and distinguished capacity. And the Reputation of their Kinsman, *Jephthah*, made them first apply to him.

But Jephthah, with the frank roughness of a soldier of fortune, naturally upbraided them, on this occasion, with their former neglect and injustice, in permitting his father's house so cruelly to cast him out, to want and misery; and now, as meanly, without redressing his injuries, to fly to him in their distress.

They reply, they were now come to make him that amends, by their choice of him for *Head* over all the Inhabitants of Gilead.

Jephthah accepts this satisfaction: and an *Act* is made of their proceedings according to the religious customs of those times.

All this while, the *Republic*, the Theocracy itself, seems to have been little thought of, by this future *Judge of Israel*. Indeed the honour of so sacred a station had small charms for our licentious Outlaw.

However, in consequence of the reconciliation, and in pursuance of the Choice which the *Gileadites* had made of him, for their Head and Leader, he enters on his office. And now, perhaps, for the first time, he observed, towards his enemies, all the punctilios of the Law of Arms.

He sent to know of the Children of Ammon, why they committed hostilities against his countrymen. They answered, that the Israelites had unjustly dispossessed them of their Lands; and that they were now assembled in arms to recover the inheritance of their Fathers. To this, the *Bastard of Gilead*, like an able Advocate, as well as a determined Chieftain, replied, That when Israel, under

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the conduct of Moses, had left Egypt, to take possession of the Land, promised to their Forefathers, and now given to them by their GOD, they had craved leave of the intermediate People, and particularly of the *Children of Ammon*, for a free passage through their Country, according to the Law of Nations, which being denied unto them, they forced their way; and when hostilely opposed, and their enemies overcome in battle, they took possession, as, by the Laws of War, they might do, of the Lands of the Conquered. So far was well; and suitable to the dignity of a *Judge of Israel*.

But, by what follows, it appears that our famous Adventurer was, as yet, more than half a Pagan; for thus he proceeds—*So now the Lord God of Israel hath dispossessed the Amorites from before his People Israel; and shouldest thou possess it?* WILT NOT THOU POSSESS THAT WHICH CHEMOSH, THY GOD, GIVETH THEE TO POSSESS? *So whomsoever the* LORD, OUR GOD, *shall drive out from before us, them will we possess**. This was said, on the Gentile principle of *local tutelary Deities*, in all the grossness of that notion; not yet refined and rationalized by our Adventurer, on the ideas of the Law. But when he resumes the *civil argument*, he again reasons better: and very solidly pleads the general law of PRESCRIPTION, in defence of his People—*While Israel* (says he) *dwelt in Heshbon and her Towns, and in Aroer and her Towns, and in all the Cities that be along, by the Coasts of Arnon*, THREE HUNDRED YEARS; *Why therefore did ye not recover them* WITHIN THAT TIME†? But the force of this Argument making no impression, the negotiation ended in an appeal to arms. *Jephthah* leads out his Troops against Ammon. And, in the Forefront, without doubt, were those faithful Bands, which he had collected and disciplined in the Land of *Tob*.

The first step he takes to invite Success, was the making an absurd Pagan Vow, that, if he returned with Victory, he would sacrifice, for a burnt-offering to God, whatsoever came first out of the doors of his house‡ to welcome his return. He came back a Conqueror; and his Daughter, impatient to celebrate his Triumph, being the first who met him, was, for his Oath's sake, (though

* Judges xi. 23, 24. † Ver. 26. ‡ Ver. 31.

with

with extreme regret, because, *besides her, he had neither son nor daughter**,) sacrificed for her pains, according to the then established custom of *Idolatry*; which, on such occasions, required a Sacrifice of what was most dear or precious to the offerer. For, I hardly believe that *Jephthah* was, at this time, so learned in the LAW, as even the Poet Voltaire; or that he had proceeded, like him, so far in the sacred text, as to misunderstand or misinterpret this famous *twenty-seventh Chapter of Leviticus*, in support of so impious an action. The unhappy father appears, at this time, to understand so little of the LAW, as not to be able to distinguish what it had in common with Paganism, (namely, the custom of offering eucharistical Sacrifices on every great and fortunate event) from what it had in direct opposition to it (viz. that dire impiety of *human Sacrifice*).

The account here given appears to be the natural explanation of a plain Story. But Commentators, full of the ideas of *Papal*, rather than of the *Mosaic* times; and paying a blind reverence to the character of a *Judge of Israel*, make the Daughter, to save her father's honour, return *vow* for *vow*; and so consecrate herself to a Virgin State. Solutions like these expose Sacred Scripture to the scorn and derision of unbelievers.

But against our account of JEPHTHAH's Vow, which makes the whole to be conceived and perpetrated on Pagan principles and practices, our adversaries,

1. Bid us observe, that the action is not condemned. A censure, they think, it could not have escaped, had the Sacred Historian deemed it an impiety.

2. That the text tells us further, that *Jephthah went out in the Spirit of the Lord* †, and therefore they conclude, that he returned in the same *Spirit*.

3. Lastly, that Jephthah is extolled by the Author of *the Epistle to the Hebrews* ‡, and numbered in the class of sacred Heroes.

To these objections, in their order.

First, They who lay so much stress on the Action's having passed uncensured, consider neither the nature of the Composition, nor the genius of the Historian. The narrative itself is a brief Compendium, or rather extract from the *Records of State*, entered as things passed, and

* Ver. 34. † Ver. 29. ‡ Ch. xi. ver. 32.

then

then laid up in the Archives of their Scribes. In this species of Composition it is not the wont to dwell either on the causes, the qualities, or the consequences of Actions, but simply to tell the naked Facts.

Nor had the Writers of those times improved History into an art. They transcribed or abridged, merely for the sake of the people's information in facts, of what they found recorded in their venerable Archives. This was the case in the Story of the *lying Prophet*, in the affair of the *Altar of Bethel* *. His crime is neither condemned, nor is his punishment recorded. Had the *History* been a *Romance*, forged at pleasure, both these particulars had assuredly been dwelt upon at large.

Besides, as the nature and quality of actions are best seen by the *Laws* and *Customs* of the people concerned; and the action in question was well understood, both by the Writer, and his Readers, to be condemned by the *Mosaic Ritual*, it less needed a Censure. The faithful Followers of the LAW, for whose service this adventure was recorded, wanted no historian of prophetic Authority to tell them, (after they had seen *human sacrifices* execrated in almost every page of their History) that *Jephthah's sacrifice of his Daughter* was either an impious imitation of Pagan practices, or an ignorant presumption in the half-paganized Votary, that he was here complying with the famous precept of the Law in Leviticus †, when indeed (as we have shewn at large) it related to quite another thing.

But further, it is not peculiar to this story, to furnish an objection (such as it is) from the sacred Writer's not interposing with his own judgment, concerning the *moral quality* of the action related. Scripture abounds with instances of this sort; a silence occasioned by one or other of the causes here explained.

2. But *Jephthah* (which is the second objection) *went out in the spirit of the Lord*, and therefore (they conclude) he must needs return *in the same spirit*.

Now though, on a less important occasion, I should be tempted to acquiesce in the *Criticism*, though not in the *spirit*, of Spinosa, that this expression was to be put to the account of the *sacred phraseology* of the Jews;

* 1 Kings xiii. † Ch. xxvii. ver. 29.

and to mean no more than the strength, the courage, and the address of a consummate leader; yet the language being here applied to a *Judge of Israel*, and in the actual exercise of his office, I can readily allow that it signifies some *supernatural assistance*.

But what then? when the work committed to him, and for which he was thus qualified, was well over, we have no reason to suppose that the same spirit constantly rested on him, but very much to conclude the contrary. One of his most illustrious successors, SAMSON, had still a larger share of this *divine Spirit* imparted to him; yet nobody imagines that it rested with him; when, contrary to the LAW, he chose a wife from among the Philistines, or revealed the secret intrusted with him to Delilah; delinquencies much less criminal than the Sacrifice of a Daughter.

3.—But then, "the Author of the *Epistle to the Hebrews* extols him; and lifts him into the number of the most distinguished of the Jewish Heroes."—But for what is he thus extolled?—For his rash *vow*? No surely. David is extolled in the same place, and in the same manner. Is it for the murder of Uriah, and adultery with his Wife? Surely neither of the Heroes are extolled for these exploits; but for their FAITH in God, and their zeal for the advancement of the THEOCRACY. So says the Writer himself; where, recapitulating the works and achievements of FAITH, he goes on, in these words—*And what shall I more say, For the time would fail me to tell of Gideon and Barak, and of Samson and of* JEPHTHAH, *of David also and Samuel*, &c.*—This FAITH was so active and eminent in DAVID, that, notwithstanding his two gross immoralities, he is called by God himself, A MAN AFTER HIS OWN HEART. For, as this illustrious Title neither covered, nor atoned, for his crimes, so neither did his crimes hinder its being bestowed upon him, when the question only concerned his zeal for the LAW and the THEOCRACY; as I have shewn to these Philosophers, on another occasion.

To conclude with JEPHTHAH.—We know, though only in general, that he lived long enough in the exercise of his Ministry, and, consequently, under the occasional guid-

* Heb. xi. 32.

ance

ance of God's holy Spirit, to wipe out all the Pagan impressions of his ill education. DAVID, with a much better in his early youth, kept on improving in the knowledge of the LAW. He was at first somewhat scandalized at the *prosperity of the wicked:* but when he *came into the sanctuary*, i. e. when he had gained a more exact and perfect knowledge of the Dispensation, *then*, as he tells us, *he understood the end of those men.*—In these respects, indeed, we are left more to our conjectures concerning JEPHTHAH. His History tells us, *he judged Israel for six years* *. We are further informed (and this is all) that he defeated the Ephraimites †; who had picked a groundless quarrel with him; which ended as it is fit all such quarrels should end.

But, though we have now done with the personal Character of *Jephthah*, and his rash Vow; we have something more to say of the general Character of a *Judge of Israel*, as it holds in common with that of many other of God's *chosen servants:* whose faults and imperfections the malice of Unbelievers have carefully drawn out, and objected to us, as matter of scandal; tending to impeach the veracity of Sacred History, and the Evidence that God thus interposed in support of his revealed Will.

To clear up this matter, it may be sufficient to observe, that when God sees fit, in an extraordinary way, to give a new revelation of his WILL to man, we may conclude, from the very nature of things, that he will not disgrace his own DISPENSATION, by the use of unworthy Instruments.

Both the *dignity* and *interests* of Revelation require, that the *first Bearers* of these glad tidings to mankind should be fully possessed of that *power* of Virtue which true religion only can bestow.

The *dignity* of Revelation requires that so bright an emanation from the very source of light and purity should not be conveyed to us through a polluted medium. The *interests* of it, likewise, reclaim against such an unworthy Service.

A sanctity of manners, which is so necessary to support the mission, is the natural and inseparable attendant on the Office. For, in the promulgation of a new Religion, besides those marks of truth arising from the purity and

* Judges xii. 7. † Ch. xii. ver. 1.

reasonableness of the Doctrine, which shew it to be WORTHY of the Author to whom it is ascribed, there is need, in order to prove that it ACTUALLY CAME FROM HIM, of certain MIRACULOUS powers, declarative of the nature of the *Dispensation*; and attendant on the sanctification of the heart of the Messenger.

But the *character* of God's Instruments, and the *conduct* of Providence in the use of them, may be very different from those who are only raised up, and employed for the *support* of an established *Dispensation*; as in the Jewish economy; or for the *reformation* of it, as in the Christian: though in the Jewish, administered by an extraordinary Providence, these Instruments may have had *extraordinary powers* intrusted to them, which those of the Christian had not. Here [*i. e.* for the support or reformation of things received and established] the same conclusion, for the necessity of sanctity of manners, will not hold. It being sufficient, for this purpose, that God, in the settled course of his Providence, is incessantly producing GOOD OUT OF EVIL. And the *irregular* Instrument is frequently made to serve, without his knowledge, and even against his will, the great ends of piety and truth.

Of the evidence of this, the History of the Church affords us many examples.

When God had gradually prepared, and, at length, fitted his *Chosen People* for the reception of the LAW, his early Instruments were selected from the most virtuous amongst men, NOAH, ABRAHAM, and MOSES:

And, again, when he first prepared the World for the promulgation of the GOSPEL (which was the completion of the LAW) he committed the care of it to men of the most unblemished and exemplary characters; such as John the Baptist, and the blessed Apostles.

But, in the *Establishment*, in the *Support*, and in the *Reformation* of Religion (the second and inferior Operation of Divine Love to Man) God did not disdain to employ less perfect Instruments, in either Dispensation. He served himself of DAVID for the LAW, and of CONSTANTINE for the GOSPEL. And under the former of these Dispensations, both before and after the period here referred to, when he had decreed, either to execute

vengeance

vengeance on the Oppressors of an offending People, or to clear the Holy Land of Idolaters, he frequently availed himself of the Agency of wicked Kings and licentious Rulers. The same gracious Providence was displayed in the preservation of Religion under the latter Dispensation. For, when the time was come that the Christian Church was to be cleansed and purified from the long pollutions of an Antichristian Usurpation, God was pleased to make use of Instruments, who had neither motives nor manners that could do honour to the *Reformation* they were appointed to bring to pass.

UNBELIEVERS did not sufficiently consider this, when they made it an objection to *revealed Religion*; nor PAPISTS, when they made the same objection to the *Protestant Reformation*. To the *First* we have already said enough on this head; and, to the other, shall only add at present, that we are far from being ashamed of receiving spiritual benefit from men, who supply these circumstances of reproach against themselves; while we find reason to adore that Hand which turned the avarice (if such was the case) of a furious Friar, and the luxury of a debauched Monarch, from their natural Mischiefs, to become productive of the greatest blessings; the Restoration of LETTERS and RELIGION.

But it is now time to go on with M. *Voltaire*, whose *Philosophy*, being grafted on his *Poetry*, produces Fruit worthy of the Stock it comes from, viz. *Fable* and *Fiction*. So that the next instance he produces of the encouragement which the LAW gives to *human sacrifices*, is Saul's *abortive vow*.—The wonder is, that he did not go on with the cases of Achan—the five Kings of the Amorites—Sisera—Agag—Adonijah—the five sons of Saul, hung up in Gibeah—and in short, all the civil and military executions recorded in the Old Testament. But in his rage to run down Religion, he has out-shot himself, and forgot his subject.—To bring him to himself, I will, in charity, direct him to a text, which, if he knows how to pervert with proper dexterity, may appear more to his purpose than any of this senseless prate. It is in the Prophet *Micah*: who addressing himself to his corrupt and idolatrous Countrymen, amongst his other exprobrations, ridicules, and, at the same time, instructs them, in this manner,—"Wherewith

" shall I come before the Lord? and bow myself before " the high God? Shall I come before him with burnt- " offerings, with Calves of a year old? Will the Lord " be pleased with thousands of Rams, or ten thousands " of rivers of Oil? SHALL I GIVE MY FIRST-BORN " FOR MY TRANSGRESSION; THE FRUIT OF MY BODY " FOR THE SIN OF MY SOUL? He hath shewed thee, " O man! what is good. And what doth the Lord re- " quire of thee, but to do justly, to love mercy, and to " walk humbly with thy God*?"

Reasoners, like our poet, may fancy, that the Prophet is here reckoning up the most efficacious of the LEGAL SACRIFICES; and consequently, that INFANTICIDE and HOMICIDE are amongst the first of that number, since all are said to be offered up to *the Lord the high God.*

To confute this groundless fancy, let me previously repeat these two observations, First, that the Law of Moses is so far from requiring or directing *human sacrifices*, that it ever treats them with the utmost abhorrence; and therefore was very unlikely to speak of them as *legal Sacrifices:* secondly, it hath been shewn that the Idolatrous Jews of these times, were accustomed to bring into the TEMPLE-SERVICE the most detested Rites of Paganism.

This being premised, let us consider the season in which these Prophecies, sent to Micah, were delivered;—to whom they were addressed—and to what end, directed. They were sent, the prophet tells us, *in the days of Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah, Kings of Judah* †.

We find by the History of these Kings, that, in their reign, the House of Judah was sunk into all kinds of vice and iniquity. But still the leading crime, through the bad example of these monarchs, was IDOLATRY; which consisted, sometimes in worshipping the God of Israel in the Pagan places of worship, called THE HIGH PLACES; at other times in worshipping Idols in the very place of God's worship, THE TEMPLE. Jotham, indeed, is said to have done *that which was right in the sight of the Lord. Howbeit that the* HIGH PLACES *were not removed; the People sacrificed and burnt incense still in the high places* ‡. But his son, Ahaz, we are told, " did not that

* Ch. vi. ver. 6, 7, 8. † Ch. i. ver. 1. ‡ 2 Kings xv. 34, 35.

" which

" which was right in the sight of the Lord his God, like " David, his Father. But he walked in the way of the " Kings of Israel. Yea, *and made his Sons to pass through* " *the* FIRE, according to the abominations of the Heathen, " whom the Lord cast out from before the Children of " Israel *." Hezekiah supplied what was wanting in the Grandfather, and reformed what was amiss, during the wicked reign of his Father.

Amongst a people so corrupt, while any sense of Religion still remained, *Rites and Ceremonies* would always take the lead of *moral duties*. The Prophet seems to have availed himself of the good reign of Hezekiah: and to aid the reformation, which that Monarch had begun, attacks labouring Superstition in its head-quarters, amidst the fires of *Moloch*.

But to strike at the root of the evil, which was substituting *ritual* modes of Worship, in the place of *moral duties*, he informs them how unacceptable the external pomp and pageantry of Religion was to the God of Israel, when not accompanied with purity of heart, and integrity of manners. This is the general sense of the Text quoted above: which, without doubt, should be thus paraphrased —*Wherewith shall I come before the Lord* (says the Prophet, personating an idolatrous and immoral Jew), *shall I bring a profusion of Calves, and Rams, and Oil,* AS THE LAW DIRECTS; *Or if these be insufficient, or unacceptable to the Deity, shall I seek, as is now the practice, for a more powerful atonement,* AMONGST THE FOREIGN RITES OF OUR PAGAN NEIGHBOURS, *who boast of something still more precious and worthy the Altars of their Gods*—MY FIRST-BORN TO BE OFFERED UP IN SACRIFICE? *Vain man,* (subjoins the Prophet) *do not God and Nature proclaim, that without* VIRTUE, *Rites and Ceremonies are of no avail, whether they be such as the* LAW *prescribes, or such as* IDOLATERS *(to whose practices thou art so enslaved) impiously fancy to be still more horribly efficacious.*

And how, *human Sacrifices* came to be so esteemed, we have shewn, in the course of this dissertation, *concerning the rise and progress of Sacrifice.*

* 2 Kings xvi. 3.

III.

From the *Sacrifice of particular men*, charged by M. Voltaire, on the Jewish LAW, he rises in his impiety to accuse it of the SACRIFICE OF A WHOLE NATION. These are his words—" It is said in Leviticus that *none* " *devoted* which *shall be devoted of men* shall be re- " deemed, but shall *surely be put to death*. The Jewish " books bear evidence, that when the Israelites overran " the little country of Canaan, they massacred, in most " of the villages, men, women, and children—because " they had been DEVOTED."

In these words are included two charges against the LAW.—1. That this *devoting* of the Canaanites was a *religious Sacrifice*. 2. Or, at least, a commanded extermination of a whole people, by the ministry of the Israelites. So that if one of them should fail, the other yet may hold.

I have already acquitted it of the first, by an explanation of the famous mistaken text in the xxviith chapter of Leviticus. We come now to the second, the censure of extreme cruelty and inhumanity in executing the command. And this will bring us to the concluding head, on this subject.—

THE MORAL GOVERNOR OF THE UNIVERSE administers his Sovereignty in two different ways: while moral Governors amongst men can, in their several departments, administer theirs only in one.

God, the Author of Nature, and Framer of its Constitution, hath so ordered and combined moral Entities, that VIRTUE generally, or for the most part, produceth HAPPINESS; while MISERY is as generally attendant upon VICE. On this disposition of things, the rewards and punishments of FREE AGENTS are first of all adjusted. But this makes it neither superfluous nor inexpedient for the God of the Universe to punish and reward in another manner, likewise. Not *superfluous*; since this constitution of Nature does not always, by reason of certain traversies in *free agency*, produce its designed effects. Not *inexpedient*; since, in that other manner, the *power* of the divine Administration is more sensibly manifested; as in the first way his *Wisdom* may be better

better collected: While, both together serve more fully to convince us, that the FIRST CAUSE is a free Agent; and that the constitution of Nature is his ordinance; and not the effect of chance or destiny.

On these accounts, a reasonable analogy would lead us to conclude, from what passeth in the government of the NATURAL WORLD, that in the early ages of mankind, when an EQUAL PROVIDENCE prevailed (as it did while men retained the knowledge of their Governor and Creator; of which more in its proper place) God would frequently interpose, in an extraordinary manner, to prevent or redress those irregularities which would, from time to time, arise, and did actually arise in God's *moral government*, while *solely* administered by that relative order of things, which his *wisdom* had so beautifully connected, and so firmly established, as to be disordered by nothing but the traversies of *free agency* in his Creatures.

That he did thus, in fact, interpose, holy Scriptures bear full evidence. The first account we have of it, after the DELUGE (in which, this part of God's moral administration was so signally displayed) is in the fate of *Sodom and Gomorrah:* And afterwards, in the EXTERMINATION OF THE CANAANITES: both these nations having, by the same unnatural crimes, *filled up the measure of their iniquities.*

In the case of *Sodom and Gomorrah*, the enormity of their vices, and the total depravity of their manners, impose silence on the most profligate opposers of Religion, however clamorous they may be in the Patronage of the *Canaanites.* Their Plea, in favour of these, arises from the Choice God is said to have made of the INSTRUMENTS of his Vengeance. *Fire and Brimstone* they easily submit to: but *Fire and Sword* revolts their humanity.

They can never (they tell us) be brought to believe that the common Father of All would employ some of his reasonable Creatures to execute his vengeance upon others of the same species, even though these others had been justly sentenced to perdition for their beastly and inhuman Vices.

They pretend to say, "that God could not, consistently with his nature and attributes, put fellow-

creatures

creatures on such an employment." They have offered no reasons for this bold assertion: and I can find none. In the mean time, we must needs be much edified with the modesty of these men; who deny that liberty to God, which they are not backward to allow to their earthly Sovereigns: Amongst whom, the right of employing *one* part of their Subjects to execute their Sentence on *another*, is every where practised, without censure or control.

But they say further, "that although God *might*, yet he certainly *would not* have recourse to *human agency* in this matter, on account of the mischiefs which such agency was likely to produce.

First, as it is extremely liable to abuse. Every Pretender to a divine command, whether feigned by an Impostor, or fancied by an Enthusiast, would, when supported by this example, never suffer their Neighbours to live in peace. And Saracen armies and Popish Crusades would be always at hand to carry on desolation in the name of God."

Secondly, "this *instrumentality* must have an ill effect on the MANNERS of the Israelites, by making their hearts callous, and insensible to the calamities of their Fellow-Creatures." These are the objections of our PHILOSOPHERS. But before they give us time to reply, they kindly take the trouble off our hands, and will needs answer for us themselves. This is one of their usual tricks, to stop or cover the disgrace of a foolish Sophism, by a shew of candour. But, indeed, their aim is to draw the Advocate of religion from solid ground, which is fairly and steadily to confute infidelity, ON ITS OWN PRINCIPLES. Of this slight of hand, the Poet Voltaire has here given us an example most worthy of him.—*This* [the extermination of the Canaanites] *had been an enormous crime, had not God himself,* THE SOVEREIGN ARBITER OF LIFE AND DEATH, *of whose conduct we are not to ask a reason, so ordained, in the impenetrable depths of his justice.*—Indeed! But we will be bold to bring him back to the state of the question.—"God the MORAL GOVERNOR of the World could not or would not (say unbelievers) make use of *human Instruments* for the destruction of the Canaanites." This is the objection.

But

But to keep us from answering, they take the business into their own hands—*God* (says this prince of Philosophers) *the* CREATOR, *the sovereign arbiter of life and death, of whose conduct we are not to ask, what dost thou? hath foreclosed all reasoning, in the impenetrable depths of his Justice.*"

Thus they raise their objection against a command of God, as MORAL GOVERNOR of the Universe, (and such he is always represented in Scripture) and then, to stop our mouths with a Flam, answer the objection themselves, by putting a PHYSICAL CREATOR in his place.

Now, of the actions of a MORAL GOVERNOR, we may, with due modesty and humility, ask the reason;—*Shall not* THE JUDGE OF ALL THE EARTH *do right?* was asked * in a similar case, by the *Father of the Faithful.* But, to the PHYSICAL CREATOR *of the Universe*, who will venture to say, *what doest thou* †?—Illustrious Philosopher! permit us therefore to answer for ourselves. We say, that the *moral Governor* of the World can never be debarred from carrying on his Administration in such a way as may best suit the ends of divine Wisdom, because human folly may encourage itself to raise, on that ground, an impious and abusive imitation. And, neither under *natural*, nor under *revealed Religion*, hath God thought fit to exempt or secure his *Laws* from such abuses.

God, under *natural Religion*, in the ordinary course of his Providence, hath, by annexing evil to Vice, made that Constitution of things the *Instrument* of punishment; but how hath this Dispensation been dishonoured, and even to the disturbance of Society itself, when these punishments, interpreted by ignorant or uncharitable men, have been turned into EXTRAORDINARY JUDGMENTS?—Again, *Peter* and *John* said, what every honest Deist is ready to say,—*We must obey God rather than Man*‡. Yet how perpetually has this truth been abused by Rebels and Fanatics.

Under *Revealed Religion*, MIRACLES, (the necessary Credential of those intrusted with its promulgation) by which Power, both the physical and intellectual Systems

* Gen. xviii. 25. † Job ix. 12. ‡ Acts v. 29.

were

were controlled, have yet occasioned innumerable abuses, defiling every age of the Church with fantastic Prodigies, and lying Wonders.

But why do I speak of these sanctions of Revelation, (the Credentials of God's Messengers) when the very Communication of his Will to Man, REVELATION itself, hath filled all ages and nations with Impostors, pretending to a divine Commission?

But our *Philosophers* go on; and say, "That this office of destruction, imposed upon the Israelites, must have produced an ill effect on their *Moral Character*, by giving them wrong notions of the *divine Nature*; and by vitiating *their own*; as it had a tendency to destroy or to weaken the Social passions and affections."

Nay, further, they pretend to see the marks of these evils in the Character of the *chosen People*: whom, therefore, instead of pitying, (and if the evils arose from the cause they assign, were most deserving of pity) they have most mercilessly abused and misrepresented. But to answer to the FIRST PART of this infidel objection, which pretends that the Jews were brought, by this employment, to entertain *wrong ideas of the Divine Nature*, I reply,—The most adorable attribute of God, the *moral Governor* of the world, is his LONG-SUFFERING, by which he bears with the crimes and follies of men, in order to bring them to repentance: Now this attribute he hath made manifest to all: but more fully to his *chosen People*; even in the very case of these devoted Canaanites. For when their crimes were arrived at the height of human depravity, He still withheld his hand, and by divers awakening Judgments, gave them time and invitation for repentance. But on their neglect and contempt of his repeated warnings, He, at length, was *forced*, as it were, to pour out his full vengeance upon them.

The Author of the Apocryphal Book, of *the Wisdom of Solomon*, thus graphically paints their case, in an Address to the Almighty:—"Thou hast mercy upon "all—thou winkest at the Sins of Men, because they "should amend—Thou sparest all; for they are thine, "thou Lover of Souls!—Therefore thou chastenest "them, by little and little, that offend; and warnest

" them by putting them in remembrance wherein they
" have offended; that leaving their wickedness, they
" may believe in thee, O Lord! For IT WAS THY WILL
" TO DESTROY BY THE HANDS OF OUR FATHERS, THOSE
" OLD INHABITANTS OF THY HOLY LAND; whom
" thou hatest for doing most odious works of Sorceries,
" and WICKED SACRIFICES—*merciless murderers of*
" *children, and devourers of man's flesh, and the feasts*
" *of blood*—Nevertheless even those thou sparedst *as*
" *Men**, and didst *send Wasps*, forerunners of thine
" host, to destroy them by little and little—executing thy
" judgments upon them by little and little, THOU GAVEST
" THEM PLACE OF REPENTANCE; not being ignorant
" that they were a naughty Generation—and their
" cogitations would never be changed †."

The Canonical Books of Scripture authenticate what this Sage Writer of after-times, here delivers, concerning God's dealing with these *devoted Nations*.

Moses, on the egression of the Israelites from Egypt, speaks thus to them, in the Person of the Almighty—" I will send *Hornets* before thee, which shall drive
" out the Hivite, the Canaanite, and the Hittite from
" before thee. I will not drive them out from before
" thee in one year, lest the land become desolate; but
" by *little and little* will I drive them out from before
" thee ‡." And again in his last exhortation to his People,—" Behold the Lord, thy God, will send the
" *Hornet* amongst them, until they that are left, and
" hide themselves from thee, be destroyed §." And Joshua, on the like occasion, tells the People that what Moses had promised, in the name of the God of Israel, God had fulfilled—*I sent the* HORNET before you, which drove them out from before you, even the two Kings of the Amorites ‖.

Here, the Reader may observe, that the *Apocryphal* Writer gives *one* reason for the *temporary* plagues, which forerun the total destruction of the Canaanites; and the Authentic Text gives another; nor will the

* i. e. for the sake of their rational nature, though by their unnatural vices they had forfeited all the prerogatives of humanity.

† Ch. xi. 23. & seq.—Ch. xii. 2. & seq. ‡ Exod. xxiii. 28.

§ Deut. vii. 20. ‖ Josh. xxiv. 12.

learned

learned Reader be at a loss to account for this difference.

The Israelites, under their Leader, *Moses*, did not want to be told, that those *temporary Plagues* were sent *in mercy*. They had, on the first opening of his Commission, been instructed by him, in the attributes of the true God, *his long suffering and bearing with the contradiction of Sinners*; and his merciful acceptance even of a late-delayed Repentance. They had experienced the unwearied exertion of this attribute, even in their own case, when their repeated perversities, which would have tired out every thing but *infinite Goodness*, were as often pardoned as they were committed. So that *they* were not ignorant, though their degenerate Posterity, in the time of this Apocryptical Writer, might want to be informed of the gracious purpose, in those warnings to a devoted People.

And as there was another use in these probationary plagues, viz. the wasting the Inhabitants of Canaan, this was the design which Moses and Joshua principally insist on, as it was the greatest encouragement to a dastardly People. *Moses*, in the name of his Master, promiseth *to send* HORNETS *before them, which* SHOULD DRIVE OUT *the Hivite, &c.* And *Joshua* reminds his People how the promise had been performed—*God sent the* HORNET *before you, which drove them out from before you*, &c.

This assurance was no more than needed. The cowardice contracted in a long state of Slavery; (a state fairly recorded, and deeply lamented by their Leader) required the assistance of all NATURE in their support.

" O nimium dilecte Deo—cui militat Æther,
" Et conjurati veniunt ad Classica venti."

But though these *warning Judgments*, these *chastisements of mercy*, were lost on those to whom they were sent, yet they were not cast away; for, in aggravating the Crimes of the *Canaanites*, they served, at the same time, to promote their speedier extermination. So admirably is the moral government of God administered, that its acts, directed to various purposes, are never issued in vain.—But what is said in holy Writ, of the previous punishments on the Canaanites, in mercy, is

given

given only as a specimen of them, and not for a complete list, as in the record of the *trying* plagues of Egypt. So that we are not to conclude, that the destructive Animals, sent amongst those miscreants, were only wasps and hornets; or that, amongst the awakening punishments, DISEASE was not one. When God was pleased, in after-ages, to punish their Descendants, the *Philistines*, for their profanation of the ARK; (which, for the sins of his people, he suffered to fall into their hands) the sacred writers tell us, that they, who so profaned it, *were smitten with emerods in their secret parts**. This is the only punishment there mentioned. Yet, by the account of the atonement, or *trespass-offering*, it appears that there was *another*.—The Philistines sent back with the Ark, which they restored, *the images of five emerods*, and FIVE MICE IN GOLD†. Who can doubt, but that, in this addition to the atonement, another punishment was intimated, viz. the *devastation of their Lands by mice?* But the sacred Writer does not leave us to mere conjecture. In speaking of these mice, he thus qualifies them,—*Mice that* MAR THE LAND. But this is not all. The text here acquaints us, though occasionally, with two punishments, inflicted on the *Canaanites*; which the history of their expulsion does not particularly mention.—We understand how fit Instruments of general devastation MICE must needs be: and we may guess how well suited the *other punishment* was for their unnatural Crimes; nor would either one, or the other, cease to remind them of the vices or punishments of their Ancestors, the Canaanites, so that, avoiding the manners of their ancestors, they might (if possible) escape their total destruction.

I shall conclude this point with an observation which naturally leads to the next, that is to say, to the SECOND PART of this infidel objection, viz. "the EFFECT which the destruction of the Canaanites must be supposed to have on the minds of the MORAL INSTRUMENTS of their punishment." A matter most deserving our attention.

It cannot be doubted but that the Almighty displayed his mercy and long suffering on *Sodom and Gomorrah*;

* 1 Sam. v. 6. † Chap. vi. 4, 5.

in

in some way analogous to what he practised in the Land of *Canaan*, (and how gracious he was in the extent of that mercy, we learn from Abraham's intercession for those Cities *) though the particulars of it be not recorded by the sacred historian: Whose silence in the one case, and not in the other, may be clearly understood. Those execrable Cities were destroyed *immediately* by God's own hand, in letting loose the *Elements* (the treasurers of his wrath) upon them.—In the deletion of the Canaanites, he was pleased to employ HUMAN INSTRUMENTS. These were to be used according to their nature; not as Entities merely *Physical*, but as *moral agents* likewise: Beings not only endowed with *Sense*, but *Sentiment*. Now it seemed but fit that such *agents* should be instructed in the reason and occasion of their Commission; especially as it was a matter of high importance; no less than to preserve them from judging perversely of the divine attributes. Accordingly Moses obviated this mischief by a detail of the abominable manners of this devoted People: together with a memorial of the ineffectual issue of their many *chastisements in mercy* to bring them to repentance, and to save them from utter deletion.

As the mischief was thus effectually obviated, the *Israelites* were, at the same time, secured from that other, (which is the second point objected to their Commission) its tendency to vitiate the most amiable passion of our nature, by destroying or weakening the benign and social feelings for the miseries of our fellow creatures. For what could God's gracious dealing with these incorrigible Miscreants teach all, who (like the Israelites) were intimately informed of their crimes, and long delayed punishment, but, in imitation of God's long forbearance, to shew mercy and compassion to their offending Brethren in distress. Nor, in fact, do we find that the *Jews* were more steeled to, or insensible of, the calamities of humanity (bating those of this devoted People) than other men, in the early Ages of society, were wont to be. And if they were not much more humanized, by being *better taught, as well as fed*, than the rest of mankind, it must be ascribed, not to this

* Gen. xviii.

Commission,

Commission, but to a certain *native perversity*, which (as strange as it may at first sight appear) might be one, amongst the very many reasons of God's choice of them, for his PECULIAR, as it made them the properest subjects to work upon, for a fuller manifestation, of his infinite mercy towards the Sons of Men. Where it might be seen, in the *deviations* from right of two People thus connected and related, that the *one* was destroyed, after all means had been employed, without effect, to bring them to REPENTANCE; and the *other* pardoned and highly favoured, when the same merciful forbearance had produced its fruit of a timely REPENTANCE, and return to GOD, after every transgression; and, at length, a determined perseverance in this their capital duty (adherence to the true God) for many ages, even to the present time.

But it may still be asked, though no mischief was derived towards the *Instruments* of this extraordinary Commission, yet what good could such a *commission* produce? I answer, much, and constant; for besides a *political* benefit to an abject unwarlike people, in teaching them the use of arms; who were to make their destined way to Empire, as well by their own power, as by the extraordinary aid of the Almighty; in order to avoid a lavish waste of miracles: besides this, (I say) there were *moral advantages*, great and lasting, derived to this Instrumentality. Horror and aversion in the *Israelites* to those unnatural Crimes which had occasioned the deletion of the *Canaanites*; whose punishment must be intimately impressed on the minds of the *chosen People*, by their being appointed the executioners of God's vengeance. To confirm this, we may observe, that both *Moses* and *Joshua*, by incessantly reminding them of the horrid depravity of that devoted People, had their eyes always intent upon this good effect.

P. 294. [II.] The eloquent *Bossuet* saith rightly, that *Protestants* have but lamely supported the FIGURE, *of* THIS IS MY BODY, &c. by those—*I am the vine—I am the door.*—And the reason he gives has its weight—*Jesus* (says he) *in the institution of the Lord's Supper*,

*was neither propounding a parable, nor explaining an allegory**—But when the learned Writer would have us infer from this, that there could be no other occasion for the use of a FIGURE, he imposes his usual artifice upon us; which was always to keep out of sight what would have detected his slight of hand. He knew there were other occasions, of employing *figurative* expressions, such as *fixing and declaring the* NATURE OF A RITE.—And this was the *occasion* here.—But then, says he, the words are detached and separated from all other discourse—there is no leading preparation †.—So say the *Socinians* likewise; in order to infer a contrary conclusion. But we have already shewn, that they are both mistaken.

There was a *leading preparation*; and that, a plain one, namely, the celebration of the paschal Supper. And we have shewn, it was the custom of our Lord to be *led* by what passed before him, to regulate his language on ideas thus prepared.—Nor was the *consecration* of the Elements in the SUPPER OF OUR LORD SEPARATE *from all other discourse.* It was preceded by, and connected with, a most affecting *discourse* on the *death and sufferings* of our *Redeemer.* Therefore the words of the Consecration do not, as M. Bossuet pretends, *carry their whole meaning within themselves*; but refer to things preceding and exterior. So that the Bishop's triumphant conclusion loses much of its lustre, when he says, *what I pretend to evince is, the embarras into which these words*—THIS IS MY BODY, *throws all the Protestant party—there was no reason for using these* STRONG TERMS *for the Institution of the Eucharist rather than for Baptism. This place I foretell shall be the eternal and inevitable confusion of the defenders of the* FIGURATIVE SENSE‡.—*There was no more reason, on the Pro-*

* —quand les uns opposoient, *ceci est mon corps*, les autres repondoient, *Je suis le vigne—Je suis la porte—le pierre etoit Christ*—Il est vrai que ces examples n'etoient pas semblables. Ce n'etoit ni en proposant une parabole, ni en expliquant une allegorie.

† Ces paroles [ceci est mon Corps, &c.] detachées de tout autre discours, portent tout leur sens en elles-mêmes.

‡ Cet endroit sera l'eternelle et inevitable confusion des Defenseurs du SENS FIGURE. Hist. des Var. Tom. i. p. 477. 8vo.

testant

testant principles, (says he) *for chusing these* STRONG TERMS *here, than in the rite of Baptism.* Surely, there was a very good one. For if it was the purpose of divine Wisdom to explain the nature of the Rite, *only by the words of the Consecration*, which it is agreed it was, as well by him who holds it to be a *real Sacrifice*, as by us who hold it is only a *feast upon Sacrifice*, there was a necessity for the use of these terms. This was not the case in instituting the Rite of Baptism, whose nature is *expressly* defined. Besides, here the matter, administered, was WATER, an element always at hand, and therefore fitly called by its *proper name*. But the FLESH and BLOOD of the Sacrifice, of which the *Lord's supper* was a festive commemoration, not being then at hand, as Christ was not yet offered on the Cross, the Elements of *Bread and Wine*, substituted in their place, were, by an elegant and necessary conversion, called the *body* and *blood*, as these elements only were declarative of the nature of the Rite, viz. a *feast upon Sacrifice*.—To support this reasoning still further. Another sacred Rite, that of the *imposition of hands*, in procuring the descent of the HOLY SPIRIT, is called the BAPTISM BY FIRE; in which, both the terms are *figurative*, as, in the *Baptism by Water*, both are literal. And why this difference? Because the Agent or Instrument of this *Baptism by Fire* being *spiritual*, there was need of *figurative terms*, taken from material things, to aid the grossness of our conceptions, concerning the manner of the operation. So that all the mystery in this affair, (I mean, so far forth as concerns the *terms of the institution*) is no more than this; when the things communicated are of a spiritual nature, as the gifts of the holy Spirit; or of a material nature not yet *in esse*, as the flesh of a Sacrifice, not yet offered up, and therefore needing another body to be substituted in its place, there, the employing *figurative terms* becomes necessary. But when the thing communicated is a material Substance, at hand, and actually capable of being employed, as *Water in Baptism*, it would rather confound, than aid our conceptions, to use *improper*, that is, *figurative* terms.

P. 298. [I.] They had one *common nature* so far as they really conveyed, or were foolishly imagined to convey, benefits to the participants. But St. Paul joining to the *Christian* and the *Jewish*, the *Gentile* sacrificial Feasts, he thought it *logically* necessary to make a distinction between the *real* and the *imaginary* benefits; which he does in this manner—*What say I then? that an* IDOL *is any thing*; *or that which is offered to Idols is any thing? No*, (says he) *both are nothing*; i. e. are equally incapable of conveying benefits. That this must be his meaning, appears from his predicating the same thing both of the *Idol* and the *offering*. Now as the *offering* had a PHYSICAL existence, what hindered but that, in his opinion, the *Idol* might have a METAPHYSICAL? Though in an efficacious and MORAL sense, Both were *nothing*. This interpretation shews that the Apostle was perfectly consistent, when just before he calls these *Idols* NOTHING, and yet, presently after, says they were DEVILS, whom, we know, in his opinion, were SOMETHING. The calling these *Idols*, *Devils*, served to explain his meaning when he said *Idols* were *nothing*, to be this, that no *benefit* was to be expected from them. And to intimate yet further, that so far from receiving benefit from *Idols*, their Worshippers, by this intercourse with them, were subject to great harm and mischief. In order to insinuate this latter assertion, the Apostle changes his *first* idea of an *Idol*, which he used in common with the Gentiles, to this *second*, which he, and all the Christians of that time, had of them.—The *Idols*, to whom the Gentiles intentionally sacrificed, were their national Gods, the *celestial Bodies*, their *dead Ancestors*; their *Kings and Benefactors*; all of them, long ago, engrafted into the public worship. From such, the Apostle owns, they could receive neither good nor harm; these being only IDOLS OF THE BRAIN.—But SATAN or the DEVIL, as the Original Author and still the fomenter of Idolatry, makes him properly and peculiarly the IDOL OF THE ALTAR. From such an *Idol* they, to whom the Apostle writes, must readily confess, much harm would arise from communicating with him, in a *Sacrificial* or sacramental feast.

Of

Of this capital Enemy of Mankind the Gentiles themselves had, somehow or other, received an obscure tradition; plentifully, indeed, contaminated with fable; which they still further polluted with new-invented Superstitions. Yet these still preserving a few traces of resemblance to the *Mosaic History*, and occasioning some conformity between the languages of error and revelation, have drawn unwary men into some dangerous conclusions, as if the Founders of our holy Religion had taken advantage of Pagan follies to form a system of DEMONOLOGY, agreeable to the preconceived fancies of their CONVERTS.—But of this, more in its place. The present occasion rather leads us to admire the Art by which the Sacred Writer has conducted his argument.

P. 319. [K.] It should seem most probable that the *miraculous powers* were, in general, occasional and temporary. But a learned Writer, who has declared himself of this opinion, hath unwarily put the *gift of tongues* into the number—

"The Gift of Tongues upon the day of Pentecost "(says he) *was not lasting, but instantaneous and* "*transitory*; not bestowed upon them for the con- "stant work of the Ministry, but as an *occasional sign* "*only*, that a person endowed with it was a chosen "minister of the Gospel: which sign, as soon as it had "served that particular purpose, seems to have ceased; "and totally to have vanished*."

Would reason, or the truth of things, suffer us to be thus compliant, we might concede to Unbelievers all which they fancy the Learned Writer hath procured for them, "that the power of tongues was temporary, and like the "power of *healing*, possessed occasionally," without being alarmed at any consequence they will be able to deduce from it. For let it be granted, that the gift of tongues returned as often as they had occasion for its use, and it is no great matter *where* it resided in the interim.

* Dr. Middleton's Essay on the Gift of Tongues, Vol. II. of his Works, p. 79.

But neither reason, nor the truth of things, will suffer us to be thus complaisant. The power of *healing the diseased* (to which Dr. M. compares the *gift of tongues*) is, during the whole course of its operation, one continued arrest or diversion of the general laws of matter and motion; it was therefore very fitting that this power should be imparted *occasionally*. But the *gift of tongues*, when once it was conferred, became, from thenceforth, a natural power; just as the free and perfect use of the members of the Body, after they had been restored, by miracle, to the exercise of their natural functions. Indeed, the loss of this *gift of tongues*, after the temporary use of it, would imply *other* miracles, as oft as there was occasion to restore what was lost by actual deprivation. Unless we can suppose that the Apostles, in the exercise of this gift, were merely irrational organs, *Automati*, through which certain sounds were conveyed. In a word, it was as much in the course of nature for an Apostle, when the holy Spirit on the Day of Pentecost had enabled him to speak a strange language, ever afterwards to have the use of that language, as it was for the Cripple, whom Jesus had restored to the use of his limbs on the sabbath day, ever afterwards to walk, to run, and perform all the functions of a man perfectly sound and entire.

In one thing, indeed, the power of *healing the diseased*, and of *speaking with strange tongues*, agreed.—As the Disciples could not heal at all times, and when they would; so neither could they speak when they would, in an unknown tongue, when it was first essayed. Yet when the holy Spirit had once enabled them to speak and understand a Language till then unknown to them, I conceive they must retain the use of it with the same facility as if they had acquired it in the ordinary way of instruction.

But the confusion in this matter, and the embarras which follows it, in the Doctor's stating the Question, arise from not distinguishing between the *active power* and the *passive gift*. In healing the diseased, the Apostles are to be considered as the *Workers of a Miracle*; in

speaking

speaking a strange tongue, as *Subjects of a miracle performed**.

P. 335. [L.] The serious Reader will be ready to ask, what learned discoveries they are which have encouraged these men to innovate from the common opinion concerning the Gospel Demoniacs? Have they found in the Scripture history of the *Demoniacs* any thing either *hurtful to morals*, or *false in Physics?* Nothing of either. And yet whatever is found there, they are not the finders.

An excellent Divine of the last age had, in his extensive researches into antiquity, collected, that both *Jews* and *Gentiles*, at and before the time of *Christ*, were infected with one common Superstition, that *Demons* and the *Souls of wicked men deceased* frequently seized upon the *bodies of the living*, and tormented them in various ways. Hence he too hastily, yet with his usual modesty, insinuated, that the *Possessions* recorded in the Gospel, and called *demoniacal*, might be of that imaginary sort; and no other in reality than OCCULT DISEASES; which being intractable by the art of medicine, were supposed to be *supernatural* (as if a good Physician was a match for any thing but the *Devil*).—To the unhappy wretches so afflicted, he supposed that Jesus might apply his salutary hands: and that to this malady, so relieved, the People gave the *fashionable* name by which, at that time, it was commonly distinguished.

Without doubt this truly learned Divine went the more readily into this bold opinion, as he had observed it to have been God's gracious method, in the course of his DISPENSATIONS, to take advantage of men's habitual prejudices, towards the support of his Revelation, by keeping his servants attached to his Ordinances.

But, here, the excellent person should have distinguished (as his Followers † were not likely to do it for

* He who would see a more complete account of this whole affair and its dependencies, is recommended to the FIRST BOOK *of the Doctrine of Grace, or the Office and Operation of the Holy Spirit*, 3d Edition, Lond. 1763. [See vol. viii. of this Edit.]

† Dr. Sykes—Dr. Lardner, &c. &c.

him) between RITES and DOCTRINES. As they were RITES only, of which God was pleased to avail himself, for the benefit of his People, in order to combat, or to elude, their fondness for Pagan usages.—In matters of DOCTRINE, the like compliance was not, nor could be, safely indulged to them, without violating the truth of things; and therefore Sacred Scripture affords us no example of such a condescension. In things pertaining only to *Rites* we have, indeed, many instances. Thus the use of *linen-garments, lighted lamps, lustrations,* and a multitude of other usages, in themselves indifferent, were brought out of *false* Religions into the *true:* and this, with high propriety and wisdom, while their new destination sanctified their use; and their use served to the easier introduction of the *new establishment.*—But to assert and support a groundless, superstitious *opinion* (if such it were) of *Diabolical possessions,* would be the infecting and contaminating the Christian Faith.

However, if the admirable Author of this hurtful Novelty did himself miss of so just and obvious a distinction, we have less reason to wonder that those of his Followers, who only aimed at something, by a faint reflection from the other's learning, should not hit (as we have said) upon what their Master had overlooked.

A late eminent Physician, who hath borrowed this notion professedly from this great man, acted a more modest and becoming part. He might pretend, by virtue of his Profession, and still more by his superior skill in it, to a profounder insight into *Nature:* At the same time, *Theology* being in another department, he was the more excusable, if he did not see all that this *Divine* Science opposed to the Opinion; an Opinion, which might be said to descend to him, by inheritance from his great namesake and relation: whose conciseness, strength, and modesty of reasoning, he hath so well copied, that to confute objections so borrowed, will be to overthrow the whole System of the *Antidemoniac* Party*.

In

* "Ut redeam autem ad Dæmoniacos; non mea est, profecto, sed aliorum ante me pietate & doctrina prestantium virorum sententia quam hic propono. Et proximo quidem sæculo, inter nostrates etiam

In his *Medica Sacra*, he hath a chapter *de dæmoniacis*; in which he hath treated the Evangelic History with all that decency and reverence which becomes a true Scholar and a serious Professor of the Christian Faith.

The first observation I shall make, in the entrance on his argument, is general; and will serve to confute all who have written on the Question. It is this—Our Antidemoniasts reason upon the case, not as they find it recordod by the *Evangelists*, but as they see it described only in a treatise of Medicine, by Aretæus, Fernelius, or any other of the faculty, where it stands unconnected with all *moral* as well as *religious* inquiries. But it hath been shewn at large, that these *demoniacal possessions* have a close relation to the Doctrine of REDEMPTION; and were therefore reasonably to be expected at the first promulgation of the GOSPEL. This sets the matter on quite another footing: and that plausible reasoning, which attends the learned person's representation, entirely disappears, when we put the case as it was in fact.

1. This proper precaution, against so defective and foreign a representation of the case, being premised, I now proceed to the reasoning employed by our learned Physician to discredit the common Opinion of a *real possession*.

His first argument stands on the extent of the Superstition, which gave birth to so many *imaginary possessions*.

"*It had not only infected the *Mosaic* Religion in par-
" ticular, but had overrun *paganism* in general."—" As
" to the Jews, who were wont to ascribe whatever there
" was of prodigious in *nature*, to the MINISTRY OF
" ANGELS, they were easily brought to believe, that
" those dire diseases, which infected the Mind and
" Body

JOSEPHUS MEADUS, Theologus, rerum sacrarum cognitione, nulli secundus, luculenta dissertatione eam propugnabit. *Cum ex eadem, igitur ac ille, familia sim oriundus,*" &c.—Præf. in Med. Sacr. p. ix. Authore RICHARDO MEAD.

* At non Judæi tantum, sed et aliis etiam gentibus in usu fuit insanos pro demoniacis habere, p. 76. A Chaldæis quidem ad Phœnices, postea ad Egyptios propagata, ad Græcos deinde, hinc ad Romanos aliasque demum gentes temporis progressu Dæmoniaca is a Religio pervenit. p. 74.

" Body equally and at once, and whose causes were " unknown, could be no other than the work of the " DEVIL*."

Let us allow all this—Let us allow that the Jews, at the time of Christ, were very superstitious in this matter. But then the learned Doctor, in his turn, will allow, that the Teachers of the Gospel, in the fulness of their inspiration, must needs be secure from an error, which so dreadfully affected the Religion they were intrusted to propagate, as *Demonianism* did, if it were an error. And if so, they *knowingly* and designedly gave it countenance and support. But how that will agree with their character and office, we shall see, as we go along.

Our Learned Doctor tells us further, " that the Jews not only gave credit to the works of the *Devil*, but believed in the *ministry* of ANGELS likewise."—This seems to be one of those slips of the pen, to which Truth sometimes betrays those who write most cautiously against her; especially when they act the part of Believers; which, however, I will not suspect was the case here. For the *Old Testament*, which the learned Doctor reverences equally with the *New*, bears ample testimony to the *real ministry of Angels*; and with such circumstances attending it, as will not permit a Believing Caviller to evade it, by having recourse to *vision*, *figure*, or *accommodation*. For if the *Angel* who waylaid Balaam may be reduced to a dusky dream, those whom Abraham entertained in Broad daylight were more substantial. When, therefore, the learned Person puts the ministry and malice of good and bad angels on the same footing, he must confess that, if the *reality* of the former be proved, the *reality* of the latter will follow.

As to the abounding Superstition, in this matter, both amongst *Jews* and *Gentiles*, I do not see how that, in the least, alters the case. The *Jews*, of this time, by a more enlarged and unrestrained Commerce with their Pagan

—* Judæi autem, siquid faceret *Natura*, ad ANGELORUM *supremi Dei Ministrorum* operam referri soliti, facile in animum sibi inducere poterant, ut diras quasdam crederent ægritudines quæ mentem simul et corpus læderent, et quarum causas cognoscere nequirent, ab angelorum malorum ἐνεργείας exoriri. p. 74.

neighbours,

neighbours, had defiled the purity of their holy Religion by many opinions borrowed from the Gentile *Philosophers.* Thus they took, we may well suppose, the *Doctrine of Demons* from PLATO, and the pre-existence (if not a *future state)* from PYTHAGORAS. Notwithstanding, it is certain, that both *Demoniacal possessions* and *future rewards and punishments* are equally supported by the acts and doctrine of Jesus and his Disciples.

This too, let me observe—The Doctrines of the FALL and of the REDEMPTION (the two principles on which our holy religion rises) are interwoven into the substance of the Christian Faith. If therefore we can suppose *Demonianism* to be only a threadbare fable, new-dressed, and offered, by way of *accommodation*, to amuse the followers of the *Gospel*, I cannot see what hinders our supposing, with SYNESIUS, a *future state* itself to be no more.

Both Opinions had the advantage of old prejudice in their favour. Yet if only one of them were true (namely, that of a *future state)*, and the other of *Demonianism*, taught but by way of *accommodation*, we see, it could hold its ground no otherwise than from the *difficulty* of erasing it from the popular belief: yet so uncomfortable a doctrine, one should think, might be removed with very little trouble.

Nay, Jesus was even invited to help forward, as it were, its discredit, had it been only a delusion. A Father* mistook his Son's disorder to be LUNACY, when, according to the Historian, it was a DIABOLIC POSSESSION. And as such, Jesus treats it. *He rebukes the* DEVIL, *who departed out of the Child, and he was cured from that very hour.* And to prevent all mistake in this matter, when the Father had told Jesus that his Disciples could not cure the *Child*, our Lord, after upbraiding his followers for their *want of faith*, tells them, however, that this *miracle* of *dispossession*, the most difficult of all, required a more extraordinary preparation for the work, than any other, by acts of piety and humiliation. For which assertion an obvious reason may be assigned, this *victory* over *Satan* being a certain mark, that the *Redemp-*

* Matt. xvii. 15.

tion

tion was completed and accomplished, this evidence of it was fitly reserved to be bestowed on the most perfect of the followers of Christ. Yet had the Satanic part been only a popular fancy, Jesus here might have decried it with advantage, while he had the Father of the sufferer on his side; who considered his Son's disease as a *Lunacy* only.

It may be said, perhaps, that the Doctrines of a *future state*, and that of *Demoniacal possessions*, which I put upon the same footing of Credibility (because the Gospel hath so put them), differ in this, that a *future state* may be proved by natural reason, which *Demoniacal possessions* cannot.—But what doth this objection infer more than this? that a *future state* makes part of NATURAL RELIGION; and *Demoniacal possessions*, a part of the REVEALED.

2. The ingenuous Discourser brings another objection to these *possessions*—Having collected together all the SYMPTOMS of this disorder, from *Matthew*, *Mark*, and *Luke*, he concludes thus—"All these are the *Symptoms* "of a natural disorder. They are more surprising, "indeed, than those of other disorders, yet nothing super-"natural*."—His learned Fellow Collegiate, Dr. *J. Freind*, treating the same subject, after he hath given us, from Ætius and Oribasius, a description of the madness called *Lycanthropy*, of which, one of the most striking SYMPTOMS was a fondness to *wander amongst the Sepulchres of the dead*, adds—*the Demoniac in the Scriptures, who was* POSSESSED WITH A LIKE SORT OF MADNESS, *is represented as having his dwelling amongst the Tombs*†.

The opinion of these two learned Naturalists is founded, we see, in this circumstance—"that the *Symptoms* of a "demoniacal possession are the same with those of some "natural disorders."—

* —Insanorum sunt hæc omnia; utrum vero a Dæmoniis, an vi morbi provenerint, disceptatur—neque enim alius quisquam inter omnes, qui humanum genus infestant, morbus tam naturæ vim excedere videtur. p. 66.

† Hist. of Physic, Part I. pp. 16—21.

But

But now, if *evil spirits* were permitted to disturb the vital functions of the human frame, whether in the solids, the fluids, or in both together; can we have any conception how this could be effected without causing or occasioning, in *supernatural disorders*, the very same SYMPTOMS which accompany *natural maladies*? These Symptoms, in both cases, must arise from the disturbance of the material Frame, and can arise no otherwise; and those disturbances, whether produced by a spiritual Agent, or by material causes, must produce the same *sensible* effects. *Madness*, for instance, whether occasioned by the malignity of an intelligent Agent *ab extra*, or by discordant humours *ab intra*, will be still *madness*, and accompanied with the same Symptoms. That appearance, therefore, which must accompany a *Demoniacal possession*, IF REAL, can never by any rules of logic be converted into a reasonable argument for the falsehood of such a possession.

It is worth observation, that one of the *Evangelists*, being a Physician, our learned Critic, by a very becoming partiality, prefers him to the rest. St. LUKE (he tells us) being superior to them *for the purity and accuracy of his expression, when there is occasion to speak of distempers, or of the cure of them; and is more particular in reciting all the miracles of our Saviour in relation to healing, than the other Evangelists are**.

All this is true; and yet St. Luke speaks the very same language with the rest concerning *demoniacal possessions*. Now if the *Gospel Demoniacs* were men only labouring under natural disorders, a Physician, by his deeper insight into Nature, with the assistance of inspiration to boot, was very-likely to have discovered the mistake; and for the glory of his art as likely to have recorded it: especially as the detection of it was the overturning a hurtful Superstition. And we know how ready these benevolent Gentlemen have ever been to detect VULGAR ERRORS.—Not to insist, at present, that St. Luke was guided, in so good a work, by a stronger passion than *honour for his profession*, as a Physician, that is, *a love for truth*, as an Evangelist.

* Ib. pp. 223—225.

This,

This, as we say, must have been the case in *diabolic possessions*, where the *Body only* was thus supernaturally affected. Yet in those, where the *mind* alone, or equally with the *body*, suffered by these disorders, I confess, we might expect some extraordinary marks or symptoms of supernatural Agency, when it was for the purpose of the EVIL SPIRIT to display his Power. Here the *immaterial* principle within us affords larger room, and more conveniences to be acted upon, by an exterior agent: although the irregular efforts of the mind itself are so wonderful as to be frequently mistaken for a foreign agency.

Yet this notwithstanding, there are, in these mental disorders, powers exhibited, that can never be mistaken, by a careful observer, for *its own*.

Some of which, are, in fact, recorded to have been exerted; in order, as it were, to confute these learned men, who seem to think we ought to reject all *diabolic possessions* but such as are ascertained by Symptoms supernatural.

An instance of such we have in* the *Damsel possessed with the Spirit of* DIVINATION, *who brought her Master much gain* by SOOTHSAYING. This Woman, Paul dispossessed, and so spoiled her Master's trade; who thereupon raised a fierce persecution against the Apostle.

The *symptoms* of *Divination* and *Soothsaying*, that is, telling of things absent, and foretelling things future, were certainly supernatural; and, for such, must be acknowledged by the Objectors; who I hope will not yet forget the Personages, they have assumed, of Believers: against whom only this reasoning on the *Demoniacs* is directed and addressed.

Having now seen what these learned Writers have to oppose to *my* System of the Gospel-Demoniacs:

I crave leave, in the next place, to bespeak their attention to what I have to urge against *theirs*. Enough hath been said to shew that this is no trifling or unimportant Question.

The untoward consequences being these, which unavoidably follow the Concession, that Jesus and his Dis-

* Acts xvi. 16, & seq.

ciples

ciples did only *accommodate* themselves to the fanciful and superstitious opinions of the times, in placing natural distempers in the visionary Class of *Supernatural*.

1. Unbelievers may conclude (and by too many they will be supposed not to conclude amiss) that much advantage is hereby gained over the Evidences of our Faith.—While it is believed, from the testimony of the Evangelists, that *Jesus cast out Devils, and healed such as were possessed with them*, that plausible subterfuge against his miraculous cures, which pretends that the relief afforded * . . . . .

* See Sermon *On the Fall of Satan*, (vol. x. of this Edit.) which completes this Note.

☞ *The Reader will please to observe, that to the following* INDEX, *is subjoined an Alphabetical* LIST *of* AUTHORS, *&c. quoted in* The DIVINE LEGATION; *which quotations are not referred to in the Index.*

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